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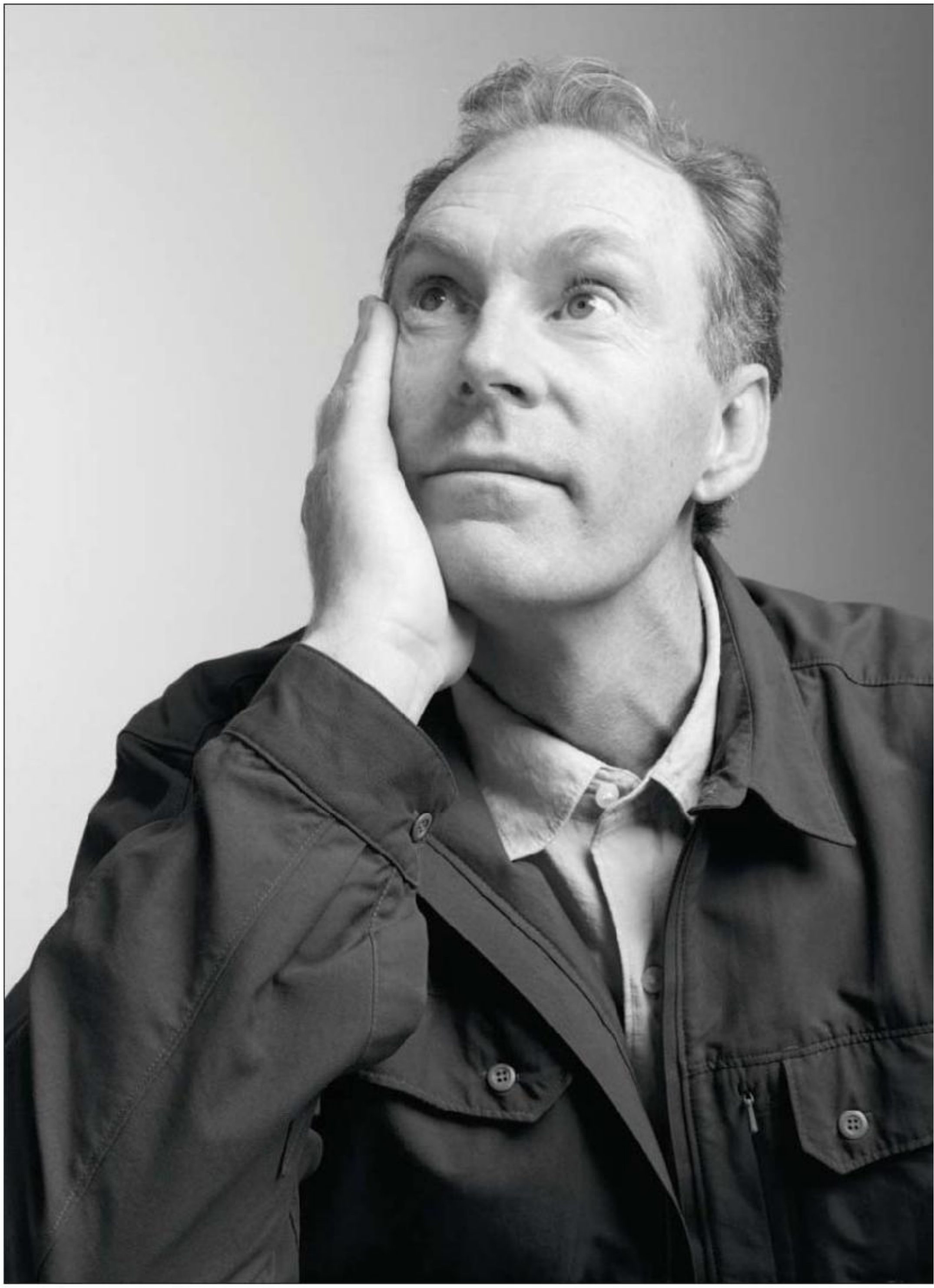
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07

Monrovia Style:

Presents the DREAMER

Bernard Trainor, landscape designer, utilizes his vivid imagination, along with his respect for the natural environs, to envision "the ideal garden" within the context of a given site. Passionate about meaningful landscapes, he strives to create "a sense of place" that translates to a relaxed atmosphere.



"Monrovia's diverse selection of plants inspire my arrangement of garden spaces by allowing me to design with a depth and rhythm that seamlessly connects one garden area to the next."

–Bernard Trainor

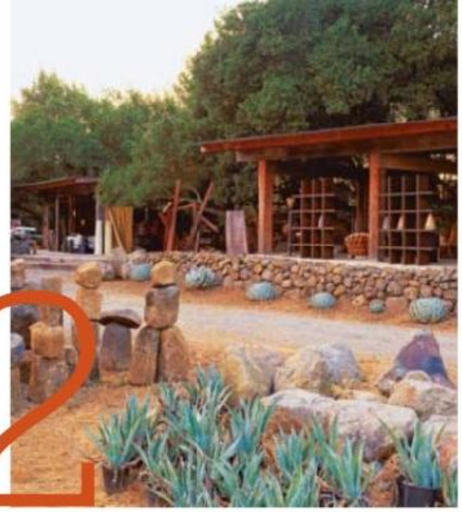


Gaillardia x 'Fanfare' PPAF



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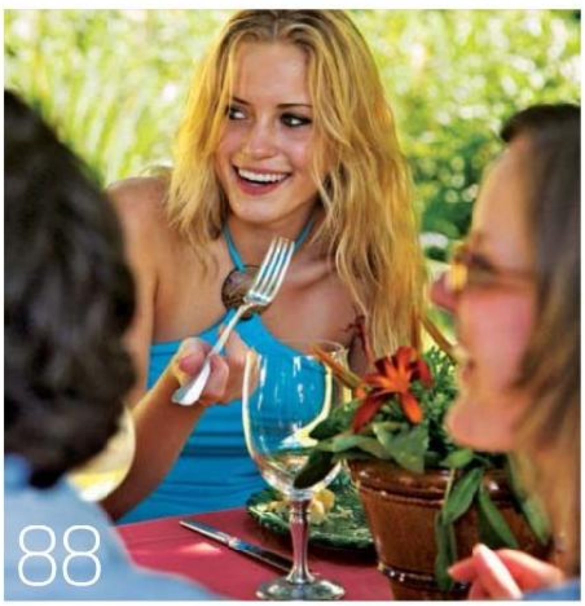
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Features

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: RICHARD FELBER (2); MARION BRENNER; ANDRE BARANOWSKI



A lush Los Angeles garden recalls all the charm of a Mediterranean farmhouse, but with such modern amenities as an outdoor kitchen, fire pit and spa. See page 34. Photo by Lisa Romerein.



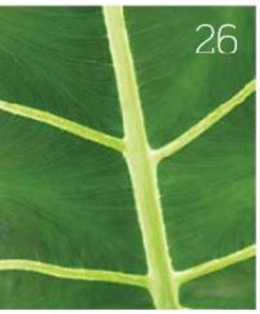
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natural attraction.
PENINSULA LOUNGE CHAIRS AND CROSSBAR COFFEE TABLE.
CUSHION FABRIC BY PERENNIALS OUTDOOR FABRICS.PERENNIALSFABRICS.COM

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Departments

■ *For more, check out gardendesign.com.*

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: ZACH STOVALL; LISA ROMEREIN; RICK DARKE; ELLIOTT JOHNSON; NIERMANN WEEKS; PAM MCLEAN; JEAN DASKAIS

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The Year of the Green Roof

I KEPT RUNNING INTO GREEN ROOFS EVERYWHERE I WENT THIS PAST spring. Yes, that's an overstatement, but understandable when you consider how few I had seen until recently—an occasional sod roof on a summer cabin, maybe one in Switzerland (or at least in the movie *Heidi*), the groundbreaking 1960 roof garden on the Kaiser Center in Oakland.

What I was seeing this year is truly inspiring for homeowners as well as the people who design our gardens and public landscapes. These cutting-edge green roofs are influential way beyond their actual rather small numbers. They offer ideas and hope for conserving energy and water, as well as for making our surroundings more appealing and teaching us how to experience nature on a more personal level.

- At Stanford Hospital (where I took my sinus infection that you and everyone else also had earlier this year), I noticed how nicely the garage-top green roof has settled in. We've gotten used to the minimalism of the grasses, wildflowers and native trees, and to their fascinating seasonal changes—no relying on wasteful watering or constant mowing to keep things artificially green and tidy.



- In Washington, D.C., to jury the awards program cosponsored by the American Society of Landscape Architects, I got a chance to inspect the new green roof atop ASLA headquarters. Planted last year, it still has to fill in, but you can sense what an interesting space it will become.
- One winner in ASLA's General Design competition showed just how much can be done on a roof. The 17th-floor garden of the Washington Mutual Center in Seattle (shown at left) offers visitors views of Puget Sound, inviting decks and pavilions for socializing and relaxing, and bold designs with native and drought-tolerant plants.
- One of the most ambitious green roofs is now under construction at the California Academy of Sciences in San Francisco's Golden Gate Park. It will cover over 190,000 square feet, with domes echoing the nearby hills and local natives emulating the area's natural landscape.
- I got perspective on the whole green roof movement when I met with Paul Kephart, founder of Rana Creek, a firm that specializes in habitat restoration and "living architecture." Paul is growing the plants for the Golden Gate Park roof, and helps plan living roofs and walls all around the country. I asked him what is driving the current interest. He said it is "performance based": Companies and government agencies know that well-designed living roofs and walls save energy and water, and that the people living and working near them will feel better and work better.

On page 52 of this issue, landscape architect Adam Arvidson brings the subject close to home in our Green Design column. Adam found a beautiful, functional green roof at a residence in Toronto (a leading green city). This is not a boring, industrial-style green roof but a colorful, ever-changing, creature-attracting slice of nature. Designing with the right plants makes the difference. We can all take heart from examples like this—which apply the latest technology and design thinking to our homes and backyards to make the earth a better place. I hope you are as inspired as I am.

—**BILL MARKEN,** EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

LEFT TO RIGHT: JOSEPH FRY; SAM BROWN


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Maple Mistake

Your April issue's "Pots That Rock" was highly enjoyable and inspiring. However, Sarah Munster's centerpiece was misidentified as *Acer palmatum* 'Bloodgood'. The plant shown is clearly a dissectum type (mounding habit, lace-leaved), while 'Bloodgood' is a palmate type (upright growing, leaves like hands). I really like the plant shown and would love to know which cultivar it is. Thanks for your help.—**Barbara Mitchell, Shoreline, WA**

Sarah Munster, the designer of the container arrangement, was able to clarify things: "My apologies to you and your readers—my supplier gave me the wrong information on the maple. It is Acer palmatum *var.* dissectum *'Inaba-shidare'—apparently an old Japanese cultivar."*—**Ed.**

Defying Physics

Please, please tell me if the bowling balls on page 93 in the March 2007 issue are in a frame and how they are kept together. *Garden Design* is the only magazine I get that I sit down and read cover to cover several times. I love it, and am so inspired.—**Lea McCagh, Cumberland, MD**

We asked Valerie Easton, the writer of the book we excerpted from for the article, about the "garden sculpture" of bowling balls. This is what she said: "I wish there had been a person standing by the pyramid for scale, as it's about nine feet high. There's no armature—just bowling balls piled up, with the plain-colored ones inside, prettier ones on the outside. It stayed standing through the Nisqually Quake a couple of years ago, but the owner says she keeps children away from it, as she worries that if they pulled out a ball the whole thing might tumble ..."—**Ed.**

Cotoneaster Query

On page 56 of the April 2007 issue, in the article about Dan Hinkley's new garden Windcliff, a plant appears under the fuchsia that looks like *Cotoneaster cooperi*. If it is, could you please give me a source? Thanks so much.—**Carol Moreno, Lakewood, WA**

According to Dan Hinkley, the plant is indeed Cotoneaster cooperi. *For a source, try Bloom River Gardens in Springfield, Oregon (541-726-8997, bloomriver.com), or Arrowhead Alpines in Fowlerville, Michigan (517-223-3581, arrowhead-alpines.com).*—**Ed.**

Missing Wildflowers?

Just received my April issue and I'm loving it. However, in regards to your story on Seattle's



new Olympic Sculpture Park, you mention how local native plants "steal the show." Well, when I look at the image on page 44, all I really see are acres and acres of non-native, water- and maintenance-intensive turf planted on angles. I find this particularly peculiar given Seattle's progressive views regarding water conservation and storm-water management. On the other hand, I do love seeing a green swath through a concrete jungle!—**Neal Schafers, Gainesville, FL**

There are several reasons the images don't reflect the abundance of natives. The planting was done in autumn, just before the photos were taken, so the plants were new and not in the peak of the growing season. Secondly, even though many of the 80,000 plants were put in at fairly mature sizes, it's a huge site and the camera angles showing wide views don't indicate the plant details the way you would see them firsthand. Third, most of the green swathes aren't turf, but rather wildflower meadows. This will be an interesting place to watch as it continues to grow and come into its own.—**Ed.**

West Coast Fan

Kudos! The April edition of *Garden Design* was the best ever. Plantsmen and designers Dan Hinkley, Thomas Hobbs and Jay Griffith were enough, but then you added species fuchsias, Bay Area designs, the Seattle shoreline and "Pots That Rock." Maybe I'm just biased because there was a lot of West Coast coverage. What can I say—we're hip!—**Ron Vanderhoff, Roger's Gardens, Corona del Mar, CA**

Bearing It

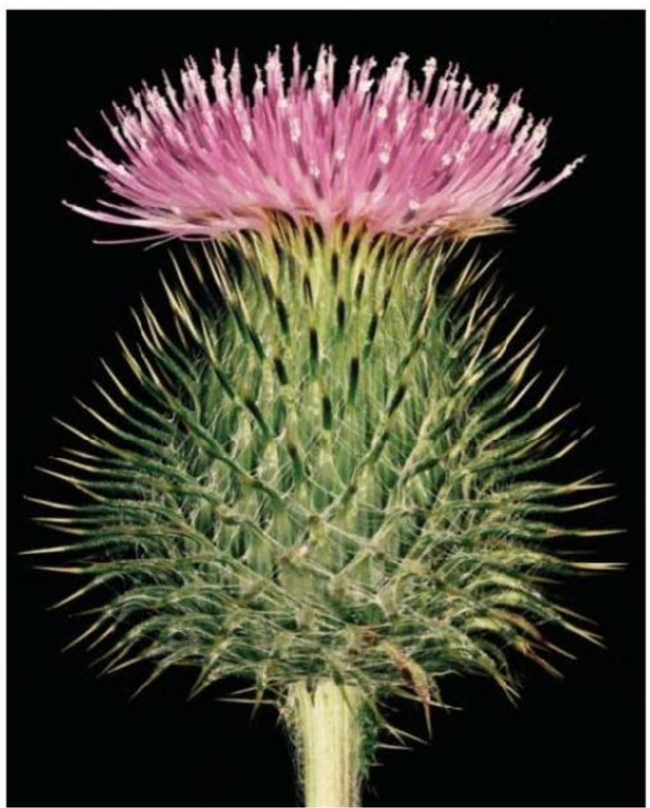
On page 22 of the March issue, in "The Cutting Edge: Lime Green Please," Olivier Giugni used bear grass in the anthurium arrangement. I wish to grow this plant but cannot identify it beyond the common name. Thank you.—**L. Hanna Burkett, Blasdell, NY**

There are two plants commonly called bear grass or basket grass, both with narrow, flexible, grass-like leaves. One is Nolina microcarpa, *a native of the Southwest and Mexico related to agaves. The bear grass in the arrangement is another native plant found from California to Canada,* Xerophyllum tenax, *which is a lily relative.*—**Ed.**

Thorny Omission

How terribly ironic it is that in the article (page 13, April 2007) about master scientist Carl Linnaeus, the "mastermind behind the genus-species system of Latin names," the photograph of the thistle bloom is identified, simply, as a "thistle."—**John Connery, Providence, RI**

Certainly no offense was intended to Mr. Linnaeus. The image by photographer Helene Schmitz (shown below) appears in the official anniversary book for the Linnaeus celebration, A Passion for Systems: Linnaeus and the Dream of Order in Nature *(Natur & Kultur, see nok.se/linne), where it is labeled* Cirsium vulgare, *which is commonly known as bull thistle.*—**Ed.**



THE ROYAL SWEDISH ACADEMY OF SCIENCES

Seeking Sharkskin

Pamela Burton's article on sharkskin agave (page 14, Jan/Feb 2007) mentioned San Marcos Growers but did not give a phone number or address. I would like to get a couple of the plants for my own home.—**John Kerestan**

San Marcos Growers (805-683-1561) in Santa Barbara, is a strictly wholesale nursery that ships only within California. Your best bet would be to try one of the following retail, mail-order sources: Yucca Do Nursery in Texas (979-826-4580, yuccado.com), TyTy Nursery in Georgia (800-972-2101, tytyga.com) and Plant Delights Nursery in North Carolina (919-772-4794, plantdelights.com). Or visit the Lawn & Garden Yellow Pages website to find a local retail source (lgyp.com).—**Ed.**

Olives in the Sunshine State

In your January/February 2007 edition (page 32), one of your "plant picks for an Asian interior" is black olive (*Bucida buceras*). A nursery in Phoenix has never heard of it. My daughter who lives in Tampa found it: a mature height of 40 to 50 feet, full sun, messy, drops leaves, spent blooms and seed pods. Is this the species you meant to recommend? Your description of the plant mimicking the look of a Japanese maple was attractive to me.—**Helen Harold, Town of Paradise Valley, AZ**

This is indeed the tree in the story, commonly called Florida black olive (so it's no surprise that your daughter in Tampa located it), though it is not an olive in the familiar sense. It can be messy planted near sidewalks or patios, but is often recommended as a shade tree for Florida (some consider it native to Florida; others do not). It is also used for bonsai. According to Davis Dalbok who helped create the interior-scapes in the story, the tree is slow-growing, and nurseries in Florida often dig mature specimens for the interior-plant industry. He thinks no other plant mimics a Japanese maple as well for interiors, and it's worth putting up with the leaf drop, which can be alleviated by consistent watering.—**Ed.**

Love That Lounge

I'd love to know where I can find the "low slung" lounge featured in your June/July 2006 issue, page 31. That outdoor lounge design is burnt into my memory, and I want it so bad! Thanks!—**Paula Choat, Eddyville, KY**

The Taconic loungers, designed by John Danzer, are available from Munder-Skiles, which has a showroom located at 799 Madison Avenue in New York City. Call 212-717-0150 or e-mail info@munder-skiles.com for more information.—**Ed.**













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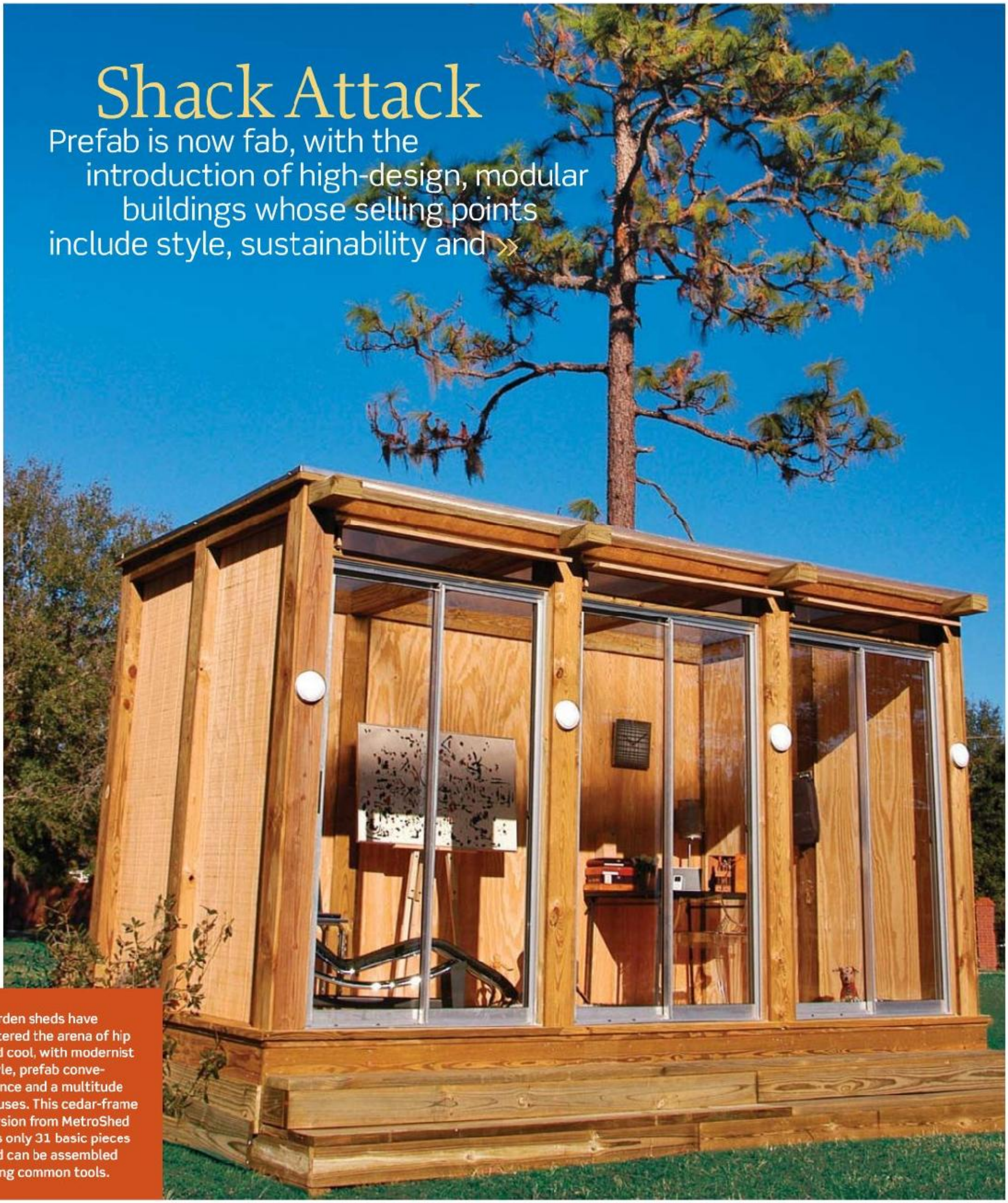
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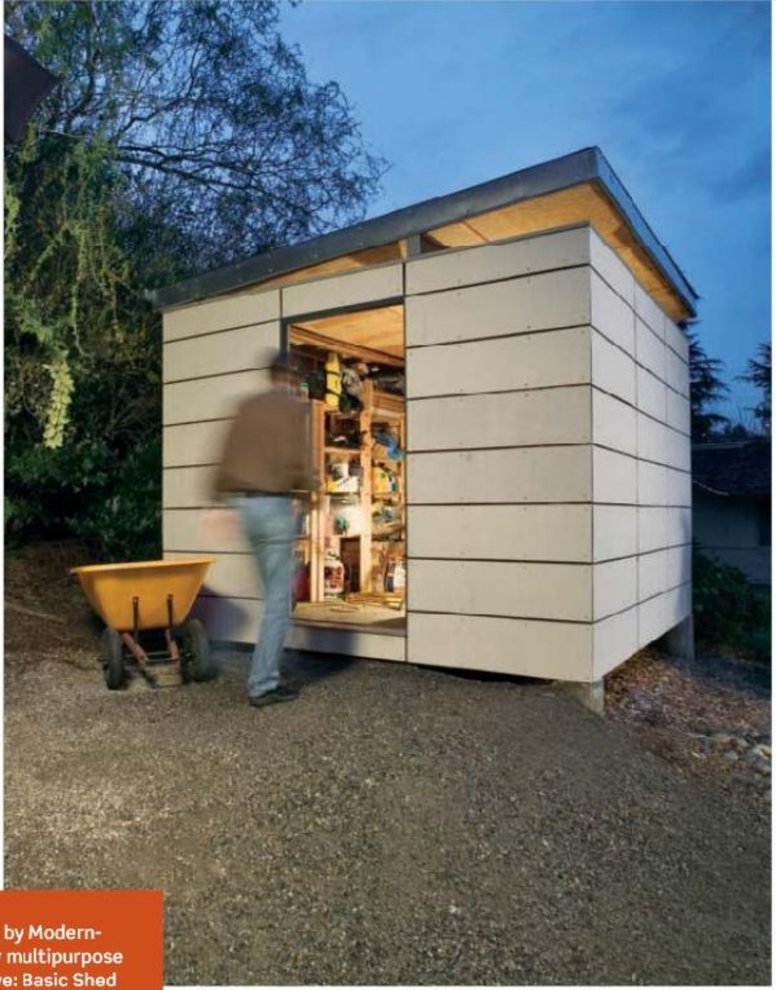
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Shack Attack

Prefab is now fab, with the introduction of high-design, modular buildings whose selling points include style, sustainability and »



Garden sheds have entered the arena of hip and cool, with modernist style, prefab convenience and a multitude of uses. This cedar-frame version from MetroShed has only 31 basic pieces and can be assembled using common tools.



quick construction. Though the trend in the United States may have started with dwellings, it has now jumped into the garden where chic outbuildings can be used for a multitude of purposes—garden sheds, art studios, playhouses, offices and home-close-to-home retreats. Modular buildings have been hip for years in Europe, catering to a clientele that wants to marry high design and low budget (Scandinavian home-decor company IKEA even sells them), but frankly there has often been a trailer-park stigma attached to them in the States—despite our warm embrace of other assembly-line items, such as cars and computers. But now the U.S. market is getting the prefab bug.

One thing that has made the difference is the involvement of respected architects and designers. Entering the modular fray are Marmol Radziner in Los Angeles, Edgar Blazona in Berkeley, Michelle Kaufmann near San Francisco, Alchemy Architects in St. Paul, and even Michael Graves, who has designed the Pavilion line of sheds sold through Target. Another factor is the green-design potential, which most prefab designers embrace. The wall insulation used by prefab shed maker Modern Cabana is recycled cotton from old denim jeans, and MetroShed's buildings use nontoxic glues in their plywood and lumber from a replenished forest source.

Two sheds by ModernShed show multipurpose uses. Above: Basic Shed turns functional storage into an attractive outdoor building. Below: Studio Shed is insulated to create a comfortable work space, with optional French doors and a range of custom colors.



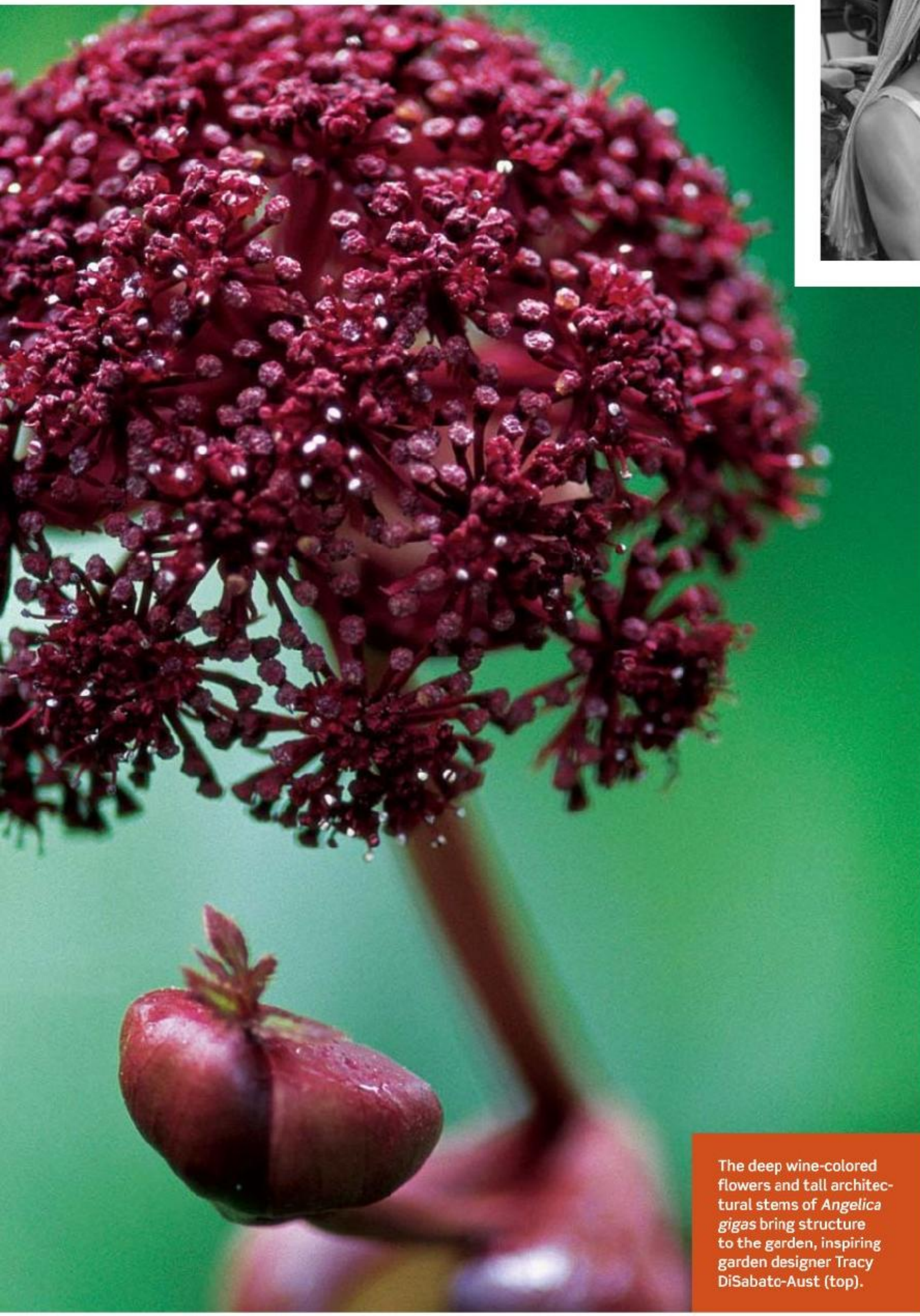
With enthusiastic demand for prefab in place, supply is still on the short side. There is a lack of manufacturing infrastructure, and getting a building permit can be a minefield in many locations. However, smaller structures like garden sheds are flying under the radar (especially if you stick with a smaller size, like a standard 120 square feet), and in some cases flying off the shelves. David Ballinger, who started MetroShed 12 years ago, says in the last three years business has been "uncontrollable." Even display sheds at trade and garden shows sell before he's finished putting them together.

Though the new sheds can be cheaper, shipping costs can make them just as expensive or more than building on location, but many feel the style, versatility, ease of assembly (most can be built in a day or so, using basic tools) and sturdiness (remember, they have to be roadworthy for shipping) make up for added cost. But no matter how much you yearn for modular, before building, check with your homeowners association and local building authority.—**JENNY ANDREWS**

fyi Three companies offering cool outbuildings via mail order are MetroShed in Orlando, Florida (310-295-0072, metroshed.com); Modern Cabana in San Francisco (415-206-9330, moderncabana.com); and ModernShed in Seattle (206-524-1188, modern-shed.com).


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Round Collection, design by Christophe Pillet.
Photo Tom Vack, Jardins du Luxembourg Paris, December 2006.
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The deep wine-colored flowers and tall architectural stems of *Angelica gigas* bring structure to the garden, inspiring garden designer Tracy DiSabato-Aust (top).

i love this plant

Angelica gigas

I was introduced to *Angelica gigas* at a lecture by landscape designer Piet Oudolf. Years later, upon seeing his use of the plant in a border at Bury Court Garden in Surrey, England, my passion for this dramatic plant was ignited.

Korean angelica is a designer's dream. A stunning architectural plant, it adds structure and depth while requiring minimal care. Its self-supporting stems, three to six feet tall, are topped by purple-tinged petioles and luscious red-purple flowers, anchored at the base by massive foliage.

Even with its size, it's a great middle- to front-of-the-border "see through" plant due to the relatively leafless flowering stems. When planted in groups in larger settings, it's an amazing focal point. *A. gigas* is awesome harmonized with *Eupatorium maculatum* 'Gateway', *Euphorbia cotinifolia*, *Phlox paniculata* 'Eva Cullum' and *Miscanthus sinensis* 'Malepartus'.

Korean angelica is biennial, blooming in summer during the plant's second year. The original plant will typically disappear after that, but don't despair—it reseeds. Even if it needs to be replaced every few years, *A. gigas* is worth growing for its high impact and low maintenance. It will ignite your passion too!—**TRACY DISABATO-AUST**

LEFT TO RIGHT: ROB CARDILLO; DR. DEBRA GOFF





cool tools

H2O Help

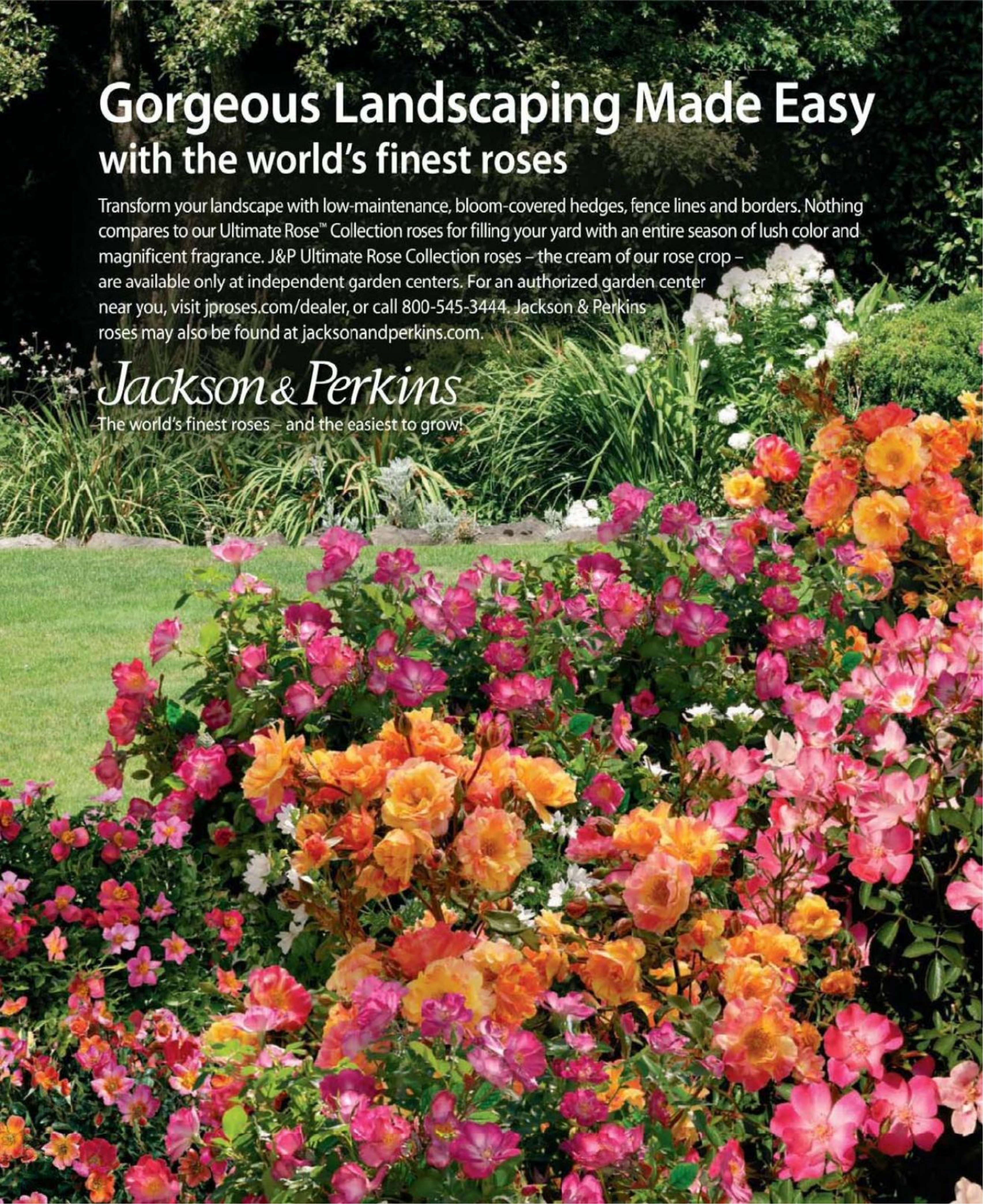
1 A WATERING CAN IS A BASIC, USEFUL TOOL, AND CAN EVEN BE STYLISH. BUT the folks at OXO have taken the convenience factor to another level with their Good Grips Indoor Pour & Store Watering Can. Perfect for caring for your precious houseplants, the can features a swiveling spout (for easy filling and under-the-sink storage), measurements on the transparent spout to view the water level (up to three quarts), a removable rose that tucks neatly into the rim of the can, and a soft, non-slip handle. Another example of good industrial design, and an affordable one at $14.99. From OXO: 800-545-4411, oxo.com.

2 Sometimes an old-fashioned approach works best. For small watering jobs or to gently keep seedlings moist in the greenhouse, the thumb pot is smart 9th-century technology. Immerse the pot in water, hold your thumb over the hole at the top, carry it to the thirsty plant and release your thumb. Voilà! The water is released from a grid of small holes in the bottom, right where you want it. Holds 12 fluid ounces; 4.5 inches high; $25. From Smith & Hawken : 800-940-1170, smithandhawken.com.

3 Worried about your potted plants getting enough water? Try this clever invention called a watering ball. Fill the globe with water and stick the long end into the soil. Water will slowly seep out, keeping the potting medium moist. It's perfect when you're going on a trip for a few days or for plants that seem to need frequent watering. Handblown glass from Europe comes in three colors (green, blue and green multi), about 14 inches tall. Set of two for $16.95. From Plow & Hearth: 800-494-7544, plowhearth.com.—**JA**



TOP LEFT: ZACH STOVALL


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exhibits

HEART OF GLASS

Marvels of craftsmanship over 100 years old, Harvard's glass flowers shine at Corning









Top right: Bluets (*Houstonia caerulea*) by glass masters Leopold and Rudolph Blaschka. Above: Oversize grass flower accompanied by the Blaschkas' original drawing for it (right). Below: *Asplenium scolopendrium*.

Wonders of science and art, the glass flowers of Harvard have amazed people for over 100 years. This year, 17 of these rare gems have been loaned to the Corning Museum of Glass in Corning, New York, for the exhibit Botanical Wonders: The Story of the Harvard Glass Flowers, on display through November 25.

Created by German glass masters Leopold Blaschka and his son Rudolph between 1886 and 1936, the flowers were originally commissioned by Harvard as botanical teaching tools. But the exquisite beauty and mind-boggling detail have since moved them into the category of artistic masterpieces. The complete Ware Collection of Blaschka Glass Models of Plants, which resides in the Harvard Museum of Natural History, encompasses over 3,000 pieces, both life-size models and oversize details of plants, representing over 800 species.

In addition to the select pieces from this vast collection, the Corning exhibit includes drawings, photographs and personal papers chosen from a wealth of Blaschka family artifacts purchased in 1993 by Corning and Harvard, and displayed here for the first time.—**JA**

For more information on the Corning Museum of Glass, call 800-732-6845 or see cmog .org. For information on Harvard's Ware Collection, call 617-495-3045 or see hmnh.harvard.edu.

NICHOLAS WILLIAMS AND ANDREW FORTUNE (3)





conservation

Prairie Preservation

A source of inspiration and great garden plants, prairies like Konza in Kansas are worth saving

THE WORD PRAIRIE EVOKES IMAGES OF WIDE-OPEN SPACES, WITH AN ENDLESS expanse of grasses swaying in the breeze. It inspired an entire school of thought on architecture and design, attributed to architect Frank Lloyd Wright and others of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, and it spurred the imaginations of countless landscape architects and designers, from Jens Jensen and Ossian Cole Simonds to Oehme, Van Sweden and Piet Oudolf. The prairie has also offered up invaluable perennial garden staples such as monarda, purple coneflower, penstemon, baptisia, butterfly weed and a host of grasses—switch grass, Indian grass, blue stem, prairie dropseed.

Nestled in the countryside near Manhattan, Kansas, lies Konza Prairie, the largest tract of native tall-grass prairie in the United States. Walking there one June, I found myself surrounded by an undulating sea of grasses and wildflowers, and wondered, "Why was this land spared the plow?" It turns out the soil here, though fertile, is quite thin and rocky with solid ledges of limestone and flint protruding from the hills, and so the land was used for livestock instead of crops. In 1971 a joint venture between the Nature Conservancy and Kansas State University oversaw the purchase of Dewey Ranch, and Konza Prairie was born. Now measuring roughly 8,600 acres, Konza will mark its 35th year in 2007—an outdoor classroom, lesson in conservation and inspiration to us all.—**TROY MARDEN**

Top: Konza Prairie in Kansas, filled with native species like pale coneflower, *Echinacea pallida* (right). For more information call 785-587-0441 or see k-state.edu/konza.

TROY MARDEN (2)


Orchard Cypress Ridge with an
overgrout technique









Jungle Fever

Elephant ears bring to mind lush, tropical forests, adding drama to both gardens and containers

NO PLANT SATISFIES THE CRAVING FOR A TASTE OF THE TROPICS LIKE ALOCASIAS. POPULAR IN Victorian times, they have enjoyed a rebirth in the recent craze for zonal-denial, exotic plants. The most recognized forms have oversized leaves, inspiring the common name elephant ears. Their rapid growth creates a show even during a short growing season, making them worthy as one-shot annuals of benefit to northern gardeners. But among the 70 or so species and their cultivars are alocasias small, medium and large, in leaf shapes from wide hearts to slim arrowheads, with colorful veining and textures from slick and glossy to thick and waxy. While their use in gardens has given them their current cachet, many also make good houseplants.—**JENNY ANDREWS**



***ALOCASIA* 'CALIDORA'** Big, dramatic hybrid of *A. gagaena* and *A. odora*, reaching five to seven feet tall with rounded, sky-pointing, dark green leaves nearly four feet long and three feet wide. Forms a "trunk" and thick sturdy stalks. Easy and fast in a partly sunny location. Hardy in Zones 9 to 11.

Appeal: High drama and bold texture are the signature benefits of showcasing alocasias in a garden or container.

Zones: Though most alocasias are native to the humid tropical climates of Southeast Asia and are fully hardy in Zones 9 to 11, many are proving root-hardy in Zone 8 and a very few in Zone 7. Most can endure temperatures down to 30 degrees, but will go dormant with a frost or temperatures below 45. In zones colder than 8, or with less hardy alocasias, the tuberous rhizomes can be stored over winter. After a frost, cut back foliage and dig up rhizomes. Allow to dry for a few days, then store in an open container with peat moss or dry potting soil barely covering the rhizome, in a cool (45 to 55 degrees), dry place. For winter protection outdoors in Zone 8 (and



Thanks to Agri-Starts, Inc. in Apopka, Florida, where these photographs were taken.

A. *MACRORRHIZA* 'BLACK STEM' A large elephant ear, three to five feet tall, with upward-pointing, two-foot wide, dark green leaves, slightly ruffled along the edges. Leaf stalks and veins on the leaf undersides are a striking ebony purple. Prefers part sun to shade. Hardy in Zones 9 to 11.

CHELSEA STICKEL (1); PAM McLEAN (1)


1


2


3


4

[1] A. LAUTERBACHIANA A native of New Guinea previously included in the genus xenophya. Long, narrow, swordlike leaves, green with a bluish cast on top, mauve-purple beneath, and scalloped on the edges, are unusual for an alocasia and make a dramatic vertical statement. Can reach five feet in height. Hardy in Zones 9 to 11, maybe Zone 8 with extra winter protection.
[2] A. MICHOLITZIANA 'FRYDEK' Velvety emerald-green leaves with prominent white veins are eight to 12 inches long and arrowhead shaped. Grows two to three feet tall in the shade garden or a container. Attractive purple-banded leaf stalks add extra interest. Hardy in Zones 9 to 11; also makes an easy houseplant.
[3] A. 'HILO BEAUTY' Striking elephant ear with a mosaic pattern of green, cream and yellow on its foliage. Plant usually stays under three feet tall, with leaves one foot long and six inches wide. A robust grower for a garden with shade or filtered light. Can also be grown in a terrarium while a young plant then moved outdoors or into a container. Root-hardy as far north as Zone 8; goes dormant at 45 degrees.
[4] A. 'PURPLE PRINCE' A hybrid elephant ear with waxy, arrowhead-shaped, purplish green leaves with iridescent veining and eggplant colored undersides, one to two feet long. Can reach three to four feet. Prefers shade or bright diffused light. Hardy in Zones 9 to 11.

Zone 7 if you're feeling lucky), cover the base of the plant with four to 12 inches of mulch.
Exposure: Most alocasias prefer filtered sun or shade, but some tolerate full sun. In general, green types can take higher light levels; dark-leaved ones need shade.
Soil: Alocasias need rich soil that is moist (not saturated) but well-drained. No elephant ear likes wet feet (the big-leaved plants you see in water gardens are the close cousins colocasias, also sometimes called elephant ears), though a few are tolerant of wet conditions. A general rule is big, green alocasias are practically indestructible and can tolerate variable moisture conditions; dark-leaved types will suffer if over watered and can stay dry for several days. Alocasias are not heavy feeders. Apply a slow-release fertilizer at planting time; in a pot, a tablespoon per six-inch pot is plenty; use incrementally more for larger containers.
Care: If foliage shows yellowing, it's probably a micronutrient deficiency. A fertilizer with micronutrients can be applied, or sprinkle Epsom salts around the base of each plant on a monthly basis. To prevent disease problems, water alocasias in the morning so they go into the night dry. If possible, water from below at the root zone rather than from above, to keep water off the leaves.

PAM MCLEAN (5)



A. RUGOSA Even when you touch this elephant ear, it's hard to believe it's real. Thick, quilted leaves with nubby texture feel like plastic. A smaller alocasia, typically eight to 12 inches tall. Hardy to Zone 9 outdoors but makes an easy houseplant (or terrarium specimen) since it is slow-growing and can take the low light and dry air typical of indoor situations.

designing with alocasias ■ Add oversized elephant ears to the perennial border for a dramatic focal point. A plant with large green leaves also gives the eye a rest amidst masses of colorful flowers. ■ Alocasias make good companions and dramatic centerpieces in mixed containers, used with other foliage plants and flowering annuals that like filtered sunlight and moist soil. Use one of the larger types in a big pot for a showstopper. ■ Purple-foliaged species combine well with silver, pink and chartreuse plants. ■ Combine elephant ears with other tropical-looking plants like cannas, bananas, variegated tapioca, caladiums and coleus for a summer jungle garden. ■ An alocasia in a container placed out in the garden can be a movable focal point, and can hide the bare spot left when spring-blooming bulbs go dormant.

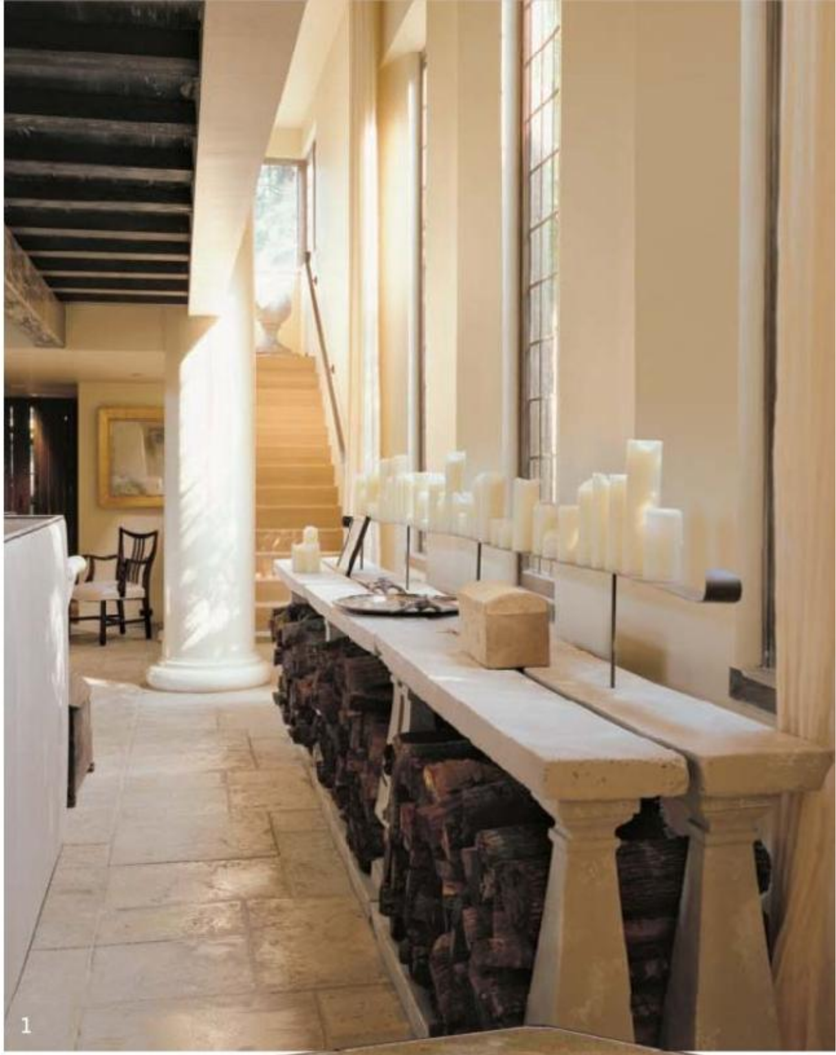


Parisian Trellis GAR281

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www.hpotter.com

style



1

Outdoor Ingénue

The console table makes its entrance into the garden

CALL IT THE DEBUTANTE OF THE OUTDOOR ROOM: INTRODUCED INTO FASHion in the early 17th century, the console table, after some 400 years, has finally made it outdoors. Here it still retains its highbrow good manners and versatility, dressed in a variety of hardwoods, or steel or stone, to withstand the vagaries of weather. The new materials have brought rejuvenation to the form, too. It seems that a breath of fresh air was just what the console table needed. And just what we needed, too. Use it outside as you would in—in either venue it can double as a foyer table arranged with a signature tableau by the lady of the house, or let it act as a bar or a buffet table at your next outdoor party. The console table articulates one of the most prevalent trends in outdoor furniture today—that whatever works outdoors works indoors as well. Just think about it: If in the 19th century, wicker furniture was brought out to the garden for an afternoon tea, today it's just as fitting to bring your console tables indoors to help out at your next guest-filled affair.—**DONNA DORIAN**



2



3

[1] **ELEGANT EARTH CONSOLE:** Architect Bobby McAlpine grouped together six cast-stone console tables to make a handsome custom firewood crib. Combining a slab top on classical pedestals, each is just as elegant on its own. From Elegant Earth: $750 each. Call 205-324-6464 or see elegantearth.com.

[2] **ANDALUSIA:** Influenced by the Moorish architecture of southern Spain, with its handsome grillwork and wrought-iron gates, this 2007 introduction is a natural addition to Richard Frinier's cast aluminum Andalusia Collection. From Century Furniture: $2,800. Call 800-852-5552 or see centuryfurniture.com.

[3] **MOELLON:** This contemporary cast-stone piece brings an Old World atmosphere perfect for sophisticated outdoor—or indoor—dining. From Formations: $9,300 to the trade. Call 310-659-3062.

TOP RIGHT: MICK HALES



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[4] TAZZA URN: Niermann Weeks again brings the beauty of neoclassical furniture to the outdoors with this dazzling console that combines a cast metal base and a wooden top. From Niermann Weeks: base, $4,859; painted top, $950. Call 212-319-7979 or see niermannweeks.com.

[5] KOA: The grace and beauty of organic form take center stage in this eco-elegant table, which brings together a base of sustainable Oriental bittersweet with an elongated slab of rare, reclaimed, hand-planed volcanic koa wood. A real natural beauty. From Laura Spector Rustic Design: custom-made by the artist, from $4,000. Call 230-254-3952 or see lauraspectorrusticdesign.com.

[6] WYATT SERVING TABLE: A new addition to the Wyatt Collection, this table, shown in elegant Lancaster Blue, boasts robust proportions and simple lines. Handcrafted from extruded aluminum for exceptional outdoor wear and available in a range of powder-coated colors. From McKinnon and Harris: $10,800, to the trade. Call 804-358-2385 or see mckinnonandharris.com.

[7] THE OSKAR: From a new collection of outdoor furniture that speaks to the style and mobility of the ever-fashionable, classic director's chair, this chic aluminum and teak console plays to all the glamour of Old Hollywood. From Sifas: $1,450. Call 305-573-0848 or see sifas.fr.

FROM THE PUBLISHER OF GARDEN DESIGN

SAMPLE A FREE ISSUE OF
CARIBBEAN TRAVEL & LIFE



ZACH STOVALL



Caribbean Travel & Life is the only national magazine devoted to bringing paradise—right to your doorstep! Whether it's exploring the lush vegetation of exotic rainforests or relaxing in the tropical gardens of an elegant spa resort, our veteran Caribbean travelers have been there to bring back the best the Caribbean has to offer. We have the inside track on the best beaches, spas, resorts, shopping, dining, nightlife and much more.

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Private Resort

Comfort meets exotica in this luxurious Los Angeles garden

PHOTOGRAPHS BY LISA ROMEREIN



WHETHER UNWINDING ALONE OR PARTYING with friends, Barbara Glazer and Philip Morton of Los Angeles like to spend as much time outside as possible. But the backyard of their 1930s Mediterranean-style home—hemmed in by a space-wasting garage, an upper terrace of scraggly roses, a dated kidney-shaped pool and a dark, dank side courtyard—was hardly an invitation to the great outdoors. So they hired landscape designer Laurie Lewis to create a new and improved garden, one that would evoke the unstudied charm of an old farmhouse in Italy. "I wanted to capture that warm, sunny, stone-baked feeling," Lewis explains. "The goal was something a bit quirky and haphazard, like the garden had been here forever and just evolved."

LAYOUT: Glazer and Morton demolished the driveway and garage to give Lewis room to redesign the pool, replace the gloomy courtyard with a cozy fire pit, and add a spa/fountain, an outdoor living room and an outdoor kitchen. "I wasn't able to separate these areas," Lewis



Stone walls unify the cushioned banquette and the kitchen counter (left), while pavers and gravel distinguish one area from another. A weathered camel saddle (below) displays glass, candles and trays.



UNDER COVER

The alfresco dining area is conveniently situated in a cool, shady loggia between the indoor kitchen and the outdoor grill. Vines climb upward past light sconces to soften any hard lines and romantically blur the line between house and garden.

INTO THE FOLD

Fabric awnings provide stylish protection against the sun's glare and blustery winds. Made of weather-resistant material and strung on heavy-duty steel cables, they can be manually extended or retracted with the help of a long pole.

REAR VIEW

The outdoor kitchen was laid out in a corner so that stainless-steel appliances would not become distracting intrusions into the green oasis. A backdrop of queen palms and creeping fig on the walls help it blend in with the rest of the garden.

HAPPY BEDFELLOWS

Mediterranean plants, many with blue-gray foliage, push through the hardscape in clusters that were designed to look random. While Jerusalem sage, lavender and lamb's ears share large beds, fragrant woolly thyme sprouts from the cracks.





Once dank and cluttered with pots, the side courtyard is now an inviting place to enjoy a fire. Ottomans and pebble paving add ethnic flavor, and pillows repeat the colors of shrimp plant, bougainvillea and orchids.

says, "so I had to use harmonious plants and materials to make them overlap and flow."

MATERIALS: Rugged, monolithic stone—and lots of it—was key to creating the illusion that the garden was original to the property. In the quest for texture and patina, everyone agreed on Santa Barbara sandstone for the walls and Sweetwater sandstone for the paving.

STYLE: "Since the house already had a Mediterranean villa feel, we tried to maintain that but introduce modern livability," Glazer says. Adds Morton: "The remodel reflects multicultural influences, including Spanish and Italian, but none of it overtly one or the other." This allowed Lewis—collaborating with interior designer Tommy Chambers—to incorporate touches as diverse as reproduction Chinese rain drums for cocktail tables, an Indian camel saddle for a sideboard and Moorish pebble paving for flooring.

PLANTS: While giant timber bamboo increases privacy behind an existing eugenia hedge, king palms and a large dragon tree (*Dracaena draco*) form a canopy overhead. Walls covered with creeping fig suggest architectural remnants, as do patio decks seamed with thyme and small echeverias. In the sunniest spots, Lewis gathered heat-tolerant Jerusalem sage, lavender and yarrow; for the cooler shadows, she chose coleus, elephant ears and ferns. "Barbara wanted lots of color," Lewis says, "so there's also shrimp plant (*Justicia brandegeeana*), nodding pincushion (*Leucospermum cordifolium*), kanga-





roo paws, trumpet vine and bougainvillea." **FURNISHINGS:** Teak chaises and armchairs from Smith & Hawken are upholstered in weather-resistant yellow-green fabric, with pillows scattered about in hushed orange, red, blue and green tones to echo the plants. A banquette loaded with pillows was built around the gas fire pit. The stainless-steel kitchen is equipped with everything from a grill and warming drawers to a sink and refrigerator. **OVERHEAD:** Four retractable fabric awnings cleverly mounted over the gravelled seating area offer shelter both on hot days and chilly nights. "In the end," Glazer says, "this was not about having a showplace but about making comfortable spaces."—**EMILY YOUNG**

■ *Contact Laurie Lewis Design at 310-459-3330 or see laurielewisdesign.com.*





Top: King palms and a Caribbean copper plant form part of the garden canopy. Above: On the deck above the new pool's waterfalls, umbrellas are set directly into the ground, rather than in metal bases.



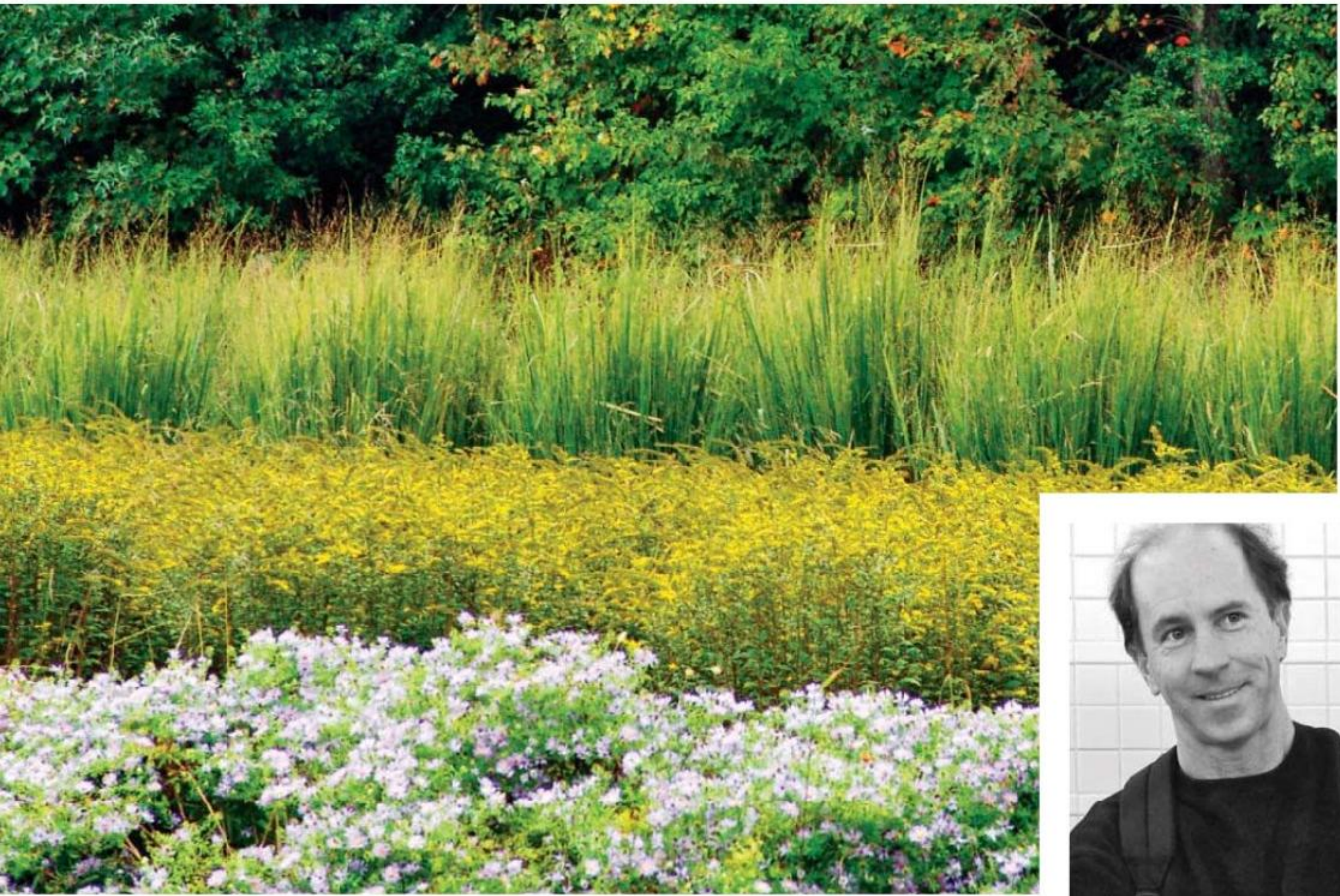







Global Goes Local

Rick Darke: Visionary plantsman and champion of a regional sense of place





In his public work, Rick Darke promotes regionally native plants, which for the Enhancing Delaware Highways project includes sweeps of asters, goldenrod and switch grass.

RICK DARKE

RICK DARKE'S INFLUENCE IN THE WORLD OF horticulture is all-pervasive—but not easy to pinpoint. He has a hefty collection of credentials to his name as a plantsman and designer, including a 20-year stint at Longwood Gardens in Kennett Square, Pennsylvania, where he eventually served as curator of plants. His book credits include a horticultural "best-seller," *The Color Encyclopedia of Ornamental Grasses* (Timber Press, 1999), which has helped to fuel the now-ubiquitous use of grasses in gardens of many stripes. But this dyed-in-the-wool taxonomist gets even more fired up when he starts talking about big-picture topics like cultural landscapes, philosophy and what he terms "landscape ethics." Yes, he loves plants and gardens, but he's obsessed with exploring the meaning of things. Like how ecology and culture are intertwined, and what it means to be a steward of the planet and why machines should be honored and integrated into the landscape. Darke continually pushes the conversation about gardening into the widest possible sphere.

The first time I heard Darke speak, about 10 years ago, he came










Windows discarded from Longwood's conservatory serve as a light-catching sculpture in Darke's garden. A meadow of 'Prairie Sky' switch grass enhances the luminous effects.

across like Henry David Thoreau on steroids. As he showed image after image of the same scene in different seasons and at various times of day, he talked about the thrill of simply noticing continual change and recording it with his camera. That fascination with mutability served as the inspiration for his personal landscape. The garden that surrounds his Landenberg, Pennsylvania, home, which he tends with his wife, horticulturist Melinda Zoehrer, conveys artistry while defying easy definitions. Plants earn their keep based on qualities like luminosity in dusky light, the way they swish in the wind, or the mood they conjure in a mass, as well as self-reliance. Darke favors native plants, but welcomes others that behave hospitably.

As a designer, Darke tends to consult on projects he calls "gardens without walls," offering insights into plant selection and ecology on shared public landscapes such as campuses, byways, old railroad lines and roadsides, and reclaimed "brownfields"—areas that were abandoned after being polluted. Although he consults on few residential gardens, he uses his lectures to spur individuals to think about their landscapes as places that can "resonate with meaning and reflect a personal sense of beauty." His interest in the Arts and Crafts movement led him to write *In Harmony With Nature: Lessons From the Arts & Crafts Garden* (Friedman). There he showed how to make connections between house and garden by following Arts and Crafts principles, such as using a color palette that reflects the region. In *The American Woodland Garden* (Timber Press, 2002), he portrayed both wild and cultivated wooded landscapes, and pointed to how to foster garden effects

RICK DARKE (2)

reminiscent of untamed places.

Darke's latest book, *The Encyclopedia of Grasses for Livable Landscapes* (Timber Press, 2007) demonstrates how grasses can be used to achieve not only dramatic effects, but also to create landscapes that "balance preservation and sustainability." In this regard, he merged his varied passions and areas of expertise to present a visually rich and thought-provoking perspective. Yes, this 484-page tome will likely serve as the ultimate reference on grasses, but here Darke also waxes eloquent on such topics as "the nature of nature," "contextual design" (when style fits the place) and "collegial landscapes" (his term for our shared spaces). "Gardens celebrating regional ecologies, or increasingly, gardens evoking lost landscapes, are more the current model," he writes. "The challenge is to identify an appropriate level of human influence versus human control." Best of all, here, as in his lectures, he shares his artist's eye through pictures from all over the world, promoting a cutting-edge design ethic informed by all his philosophical explorations.

Rick Darke's enthusiasm for making connections encourages us all to stretch beyond coaxing blooms and cultivating private plots of land to becoming stewards of what he calls "our global garden." This Renaissance man makes a compelling case for doing the right thing—beautifully.—**VIRGINIA SMALL**

For more, see rickdarke.com. Virginia Small is a gardener and writer, editor and speaker based in Woodbury, Connecticut. She is currently writing a book on the gardens of the Berkshires.



In Darke's fall garden, he relies on contrasting colors and textures, such as the peeling bark of 'Heritage' river birch, Lindheimer's silver muhly grass and red cut-leaved sumac.

Of Rice and Steel

A striking avant-garde landscape reflects Minnesota's native treasures and people

FOR ALL ITS DRAMATIC LOOKS AND DEEP HISTORICAL resonance, this minimalist gem of a landscape also clearly satisfies its fundamental function—as an "outdoor classroom" that surrounds the new Swenson Science Building at the University of Minnesota Duluth.

Designed by oslund.and.assoc. of Minneapolis, and the recipient of a 2007 Honor Award in the general design category from the American Society of Landscape Architects, the half-acre courtyard's simple sculptural forms reflect and offer tangible lessons in the agricultural heritage of the local Chippewa tribe, the legacy of Duluth's steel industry and northern Minnesota's regional landscape character.

The avant-garde design is both ecologically sustainable and gloriously minimal: Emerging from the pond, a delicate green color field of slender, waving rice stalks contrasts against rusted red-orange arcs of Duluth-made Cor-Ten steel at the water's edge—like the ribs of a vast industrial-era dinosaur—to recall the region's historic Iron Range. To one side, the simple directional line of a metal bridge and concrete walkway cuts cleanly across the courtyard, anchoring

OSLUND.AND.ASSOC.



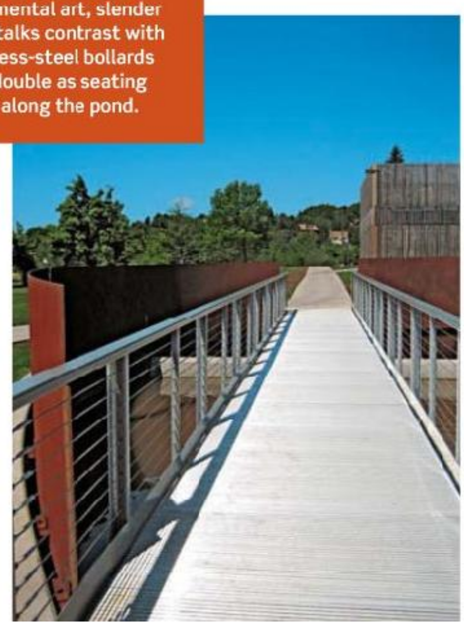
Courtyard "classroom" at the UMD campus is dramatic landscape art with a vital function. The pond, with a rim of rusted steel, recycles rainwater for research on native wild rice, seen waving in the background.

it visually and physically within the greater landscape. As pure design, the courtyard is a work of art with the primal presence of a Donald Judd sculpture. Beyond this, the garden is deeply evocative of its region's landscape character and cultural heritage. Says Thomas Oslund, the firm's principal, "Beyond the functional requirements of the project, our principles include an understanding of cultural legacies and of what 'grounds' design within a region—so that all can resonate. We filter this to abstract its essence—so the gesture is simple, elegant, and timeless."

The decision to plant northern wild rice (*Zizania palustris*) was by no means arbitrary. In fact, the rice is an annual grass that grows naturally in vast emergent wetlands ("wild rice lakes") of the Great Lakes region. Wild rice seeds remain a heritage food staple of the local Fond du Lac band of Lake Superior Chippewa. Today, wild rice merits its own Web page on the reservation website (fdlrez .com/nr/onres/wildrice.htm), and much energy is directed toward the protection and restoration of its habitat—as well as toward harvesting the rice, which is still gathered by hand in the traditional way.

By fortunate coincidence, northern wild rice is also a research specialty of UMD professor Dr. John Pastor. Given this convergence of tribal heritage and academic inquiry, native wild rice quickly became both the educational and design focus of the lower courtyard. Pastor worked with the late Larry Schwarzkopf of the Fond du Lac Reservation's Natural Resource Program to secure access to northern wild-rice seeds from the reservation.

Below: A walkway cuts cleanly across the courtyard pond. Above, right: In this work of environmental art, slender rice stalks contrast with stainless-steel bollards that double as seating areas along the pond.





Much engineering expertise went into preparing a viable on-campus wild-rice habitat. As Misa Inoue, senior landscape architect for oslund.and.assoc., explained, "The lower courtyard pond actually has two levels. The lower basin serves as an on-site retention pond that recycles rainwater from the grounds and roof. This water is returned to the rice paddy in the upper basin at a constant speed of 2,000 gallons per minute. The water then flows to the lower level as the cycle repeats." The system allows Pastor to isolate crucial research variables as he searches for the causes of the four-year cyclical rise and fall in seed productivity. Using a National Science Foundation grant, Pastor has hired three Native American students from the reservation's tribal community college to do summer fieldwork, and an additional NSF proposal is under review.

fyi For more information on oslund.and.assoc., call 612-359-9144 or see oaala.com.

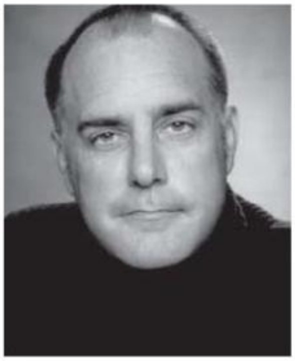
After only one growing cycle, the project is showing success: Six months after the move from their historic watershed home to the courtyard pond, the wild-rice plants were six feet tall and growing—and scientific testing has begun. Thus the native rice continues its ancient cycle in an artful new setting, serving both as a crop for scientific study and as a tribute to and a reflection of the region's Native American people.—**NOEL VERNON**

Noel Vernon, ASLA, is associate dean of environmental design at California State Polytechnic University Pomona. Her focus is what Prof. Robert Benson calls "cultural sustainability": landscape heritage and cultural landscape preservation.

LEFT: GEORGE HEINRICH. RIGHT: OSLUND.AND.ASSOC.

GOLDEN TROWEL WINNER

Modern Revision



WHAT GOLDEN TROWEL WINNER JEFFREY GORDON SMITH LOVES ABOUT HIS JOB IS, he's never working with a blank canvas. The site, house and clients all offer inspiration, and this home in San Luis Obispo, California, had a wealth of starting points—a modernist house, spectacular views and clients who wanted a multifunctional, water-wise landscape. Smith created a front garden with angled steps, textural plants and an ipe wood fence. Behind the house a series of garden rooms offers plenty of variety—including a vegetable garden. *Call 805-528-2118 or see jgsdesigns.com.*—**JENNY ANDREWS**



ELLIOTT JOHNSON (5)

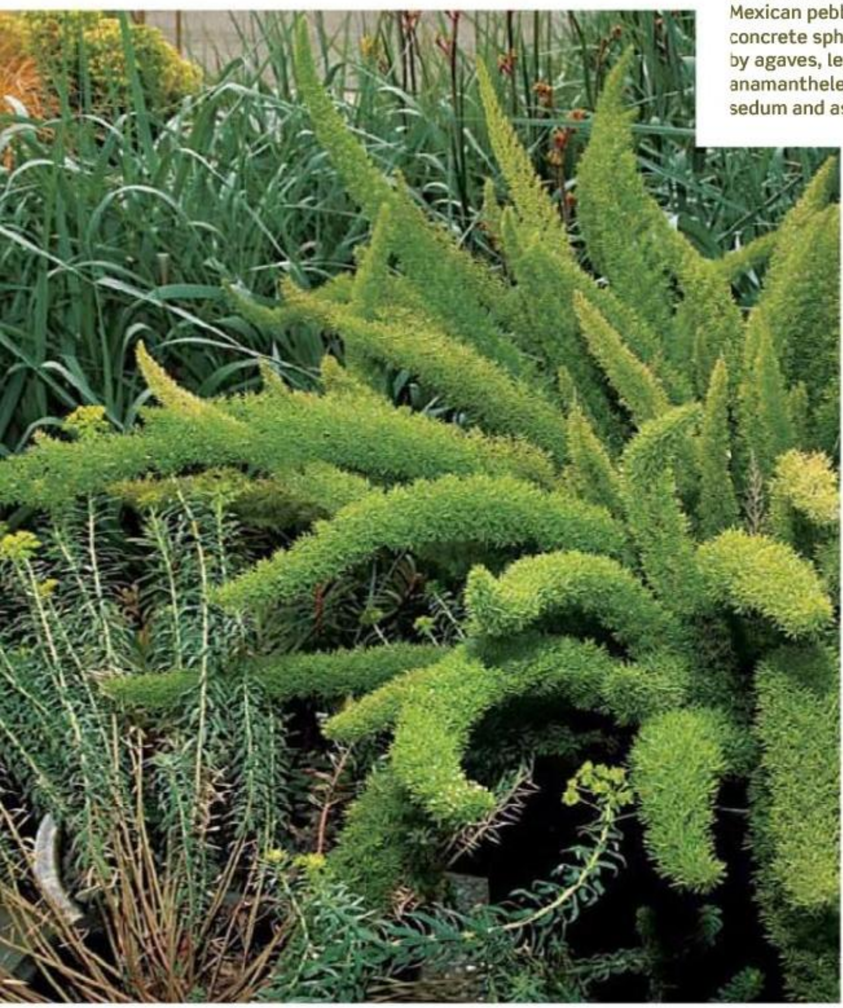
WELCOME ENTRY
Once overgrown and hidden from the street, the clean modernist lines of the house are now on view and accentuated by a bounty of plant material in a simple palette of green, gold and blue.





TEXTURE TAPESTRY

Jeffrey Gordon Smith is a master of materials, using hardscaping like aggregate, decomposed granite, Mexican pebbles and black concrete spheres, softened by agaves, leymus, senecio, anamanthele, euphorbia, sedum and asparagus fern.







WATER WISDOM
The environmentally conscious owners wanted to use as little irrigation as possible, so the landscape utilizes drought-tolerant plants like Mediterranean and California-native species such as this blue-eyed grass (*Sisyrinchium bellum*).

ELLIOTT JOHNSON (2)



ROOMS WITH A VIEW
Each room behind the house looks onto a different space, all connected by a zigzag wall. Here the Asian garden with bamboo and juncus blends into the California garden with pinkish white *Heuchera maxima* in bloom.



TERRY MCGLADE/GARDENS IN THE SKY (2)

Above: A mosiac of mixed sedums enlivens a green roof atop a house in Toronto. Below: A lower roof on the same house showcases a mixed planting of hostas and switch grass.

Gardens in the Sky

A green roof can make a beautiful and earth-friendly garden. The key is choosing the right plants to star in it



THERE'S NO QUESTION THAT GREEN ROOFS are a big subject—and a hot one today. A highly complex and engineered design solution, a green roof is a key component of contemporary eco-design that deals with one of today's major landscape challenges: the quality and quantity of storm-water runoff (for a related article, see page 88 of May 2007 *Garden Design*). A green roof can also make a roof cooler and actually prolong the life of the roof.

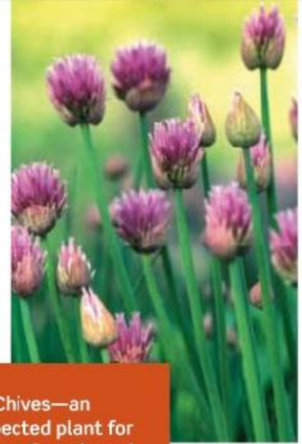
But here we are not going to get into the engineering side of green roofs. Instead, let's focus strictly on the plants, a subject that is also challenging and rich in opportunity—as well as a variety of possible pitfalls.

At their essence, green roof plantings make beautiful gardens, which can come in many different types, depending on conditions and your desires. Traditional Scandinavian sod roofs, the Hanging Gardens of Babylon and outdoor plazas on top of urban parking garages are all green roofs, with a combination of roof waterproofing, drainage and planting medium (some engineered combination of











Left: Chives—an unexpected plant for green roofs and good choice for mixed plantings. Right: Popular roof plant and hardy succulent *Sedum kamtschaticum* 'Variegatum'.

ROB CARDILLO (2)

mineral and organic material). Visually, though, the plants are the stars.

There are essentially two broad types of green roofs: intensive and extensive. Intensive roofs have a deep planting medium and can be more intensely planted. Extensive roofs are the opposite: shallow medium (typically six inches or less) and a more limited plant palette. The decision between intensive and extensive (and therefore the possible planting options) should be based on structural constraints, cost, usage and the desired aesthetic. I like to think of planting schemes falling into three categories: succulent roofs, mixed plantings and monoculture roofs. All three make an appearance at a house in Toronto, Canada, designed by its owner, architect Dean Goodman.

"Upstairs, instead of looking out over a roof," says Goodman, "we look out over a garden." Goodman's second-floor roof (page 52, lower right) is a mixed planting, with an outer border of grasses (primarily switch grass, *Panicum virgatum*) and an inner planting of a little bit of everything from lavender to bergenia to hosta. It is a lush mix of

plant palette

Climate zone, exposure, desired appearance and type of roof all play a part in selecting plants for a green roof. Here are some recommendations for the three main green roof planting approaches:

SUCCULENT ROOFS
Hardy succulents, like sedums and their relatives, look best when several species are planted together. These plants all have similar heights and textures, so the variety will come in foliage and flower color. Here are a few of the best performers:

- *Delosperma nubigenum* (ice plant)
- *Sedum album*
- *S. kamtschaticum*
- *S. rupestre*
- *S. spurium*
- *Talinum calycinum*

MIXED PLANTINGS
Roofs with mixed plantings can be almost anything you envision. Of course, conditions on your roof will dictate what you can plant—everything will have to be tolerant of dryness. Look especially for plants that grow in your area in hot, dry, exposed ecosystems, such as bluff tops, roadside fields or gravelly slopes. Here are some plants commonly used, or recommended by experts:

- *Achillea millefolium* (common white yarrow)
- *A. tomentosa* (woolly yellow yarrow)
- *Allium schoenoprasum* (common chives)
- *Bergenia*
- *Bouteloua curtipendula* (side-oats grama)
- *B. gracilis* (blue grama grass)
- *Carex flacca*
- *C. humilis* 'Hexe'
- *Deschampsia flexuosa* (wavy hairgrass)
- *Dianthus myrtinervius*
- *Festuca brachyphylla*
- *F. idahoensis*
- *Panicum virgatum* (switch grass)
- *Papaver alpinum*
- *Sesleria autumnalis* (autumn moor grass)
- *Sporobolus heterolepis* (prairie dropseed)

MONOCULTURE ROOFS A roof using only one type of plant can be very powerful aesthetically, but select your species carefully. Some plants that make a strong monoculture statement are:

- *Panicum virgatum*
- *Equisetum hyemale* (horsetails)
- *Achillea*
- *Allium schoenoprasum*
- *Sedum kamtschaticum*
- *Sesleria autumnalis*

native and non-native perennials that attracts numerous butterflies and birds.

Hosta on a roof? "These roofs aren't all full sun," explains Terry McGlade of Gardens in the Sky, designer of the house's roof plantings, "which made for interesting plant-selection possibilities." The lowest of the three roofs is a narrow strip between floors, which was planted as a monoculture with equisetum (horsetails or scouring rush). The difficult conditions here (nearly full shade and a shallow soil profile) severely limited plant choice, so McGlade recommended just one species. The effect is a strong green line of a unique texture that requires little maintenance.

The highest roof is a succulent roof (page 52, top photo,). The sedums there, says Goodman, "look after themselves well, and need the least amount of structural support." This garden is still fascinating, with a variety of colors and textures, though less exuberant than the mixed plantings on the middle roof.

But mixed plantings can go even one step further toward the green end of the discussion. One example is the Hill House, which sits within the Santa Lucia Preserve in Rancho San Carlos, on California's Monterey Peninsula. Strict environmental requirements in the preserve led Rana Creek Living Architecture, an ecological design and research firm, to create a mixed-planting green roof comprised of species native to the peninsula. *Carex pansa* and *Festuca brachyphylla* anchor the design, and are peppered with native forbs such as yarrow, wild strawberry, tidy tips and owl clover. Seeds collected prior to construction disturbance were broadcast on the roof garden.

Today we see an increasing number of examples of native mixed plantings on green roofs, a departure from the tried and true sedums. "Forget about green roof plants," counsels McGlade. "I look at what we do on green roofs as being the same as in any other picturesque garden." But the jury is still out on this. Expert Edmund C. Snodgrass, author of *Green Roof Plants* (Timber Press, 2006), would disagree. His book says specifically that "[Green roofs] are not like regular gardens ... they have no equivalent in nature." Such disagreement even among the experts begs a return to my first point: These are highly complex, engineered systems, which will be different with every installation. Unique conditions will dictate the design, but whatever the planting type, these roof gardens are always green.—**ADAM REGN ARVIDSON**

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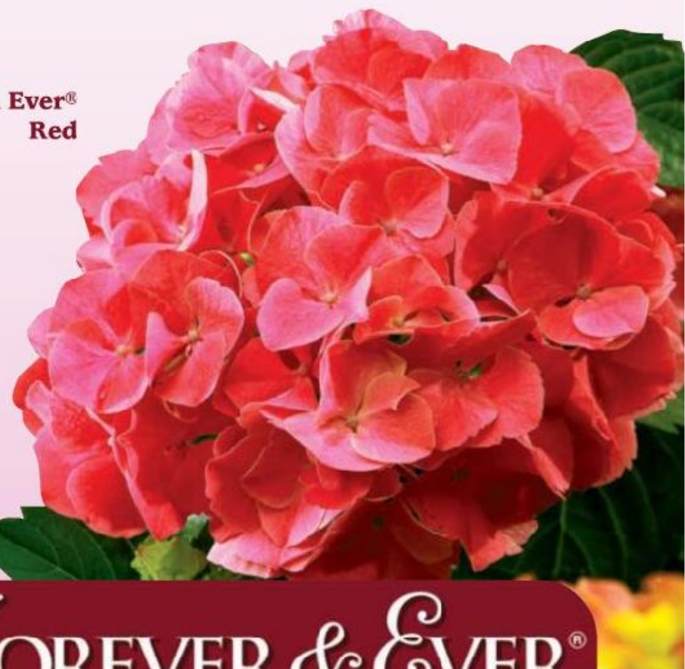


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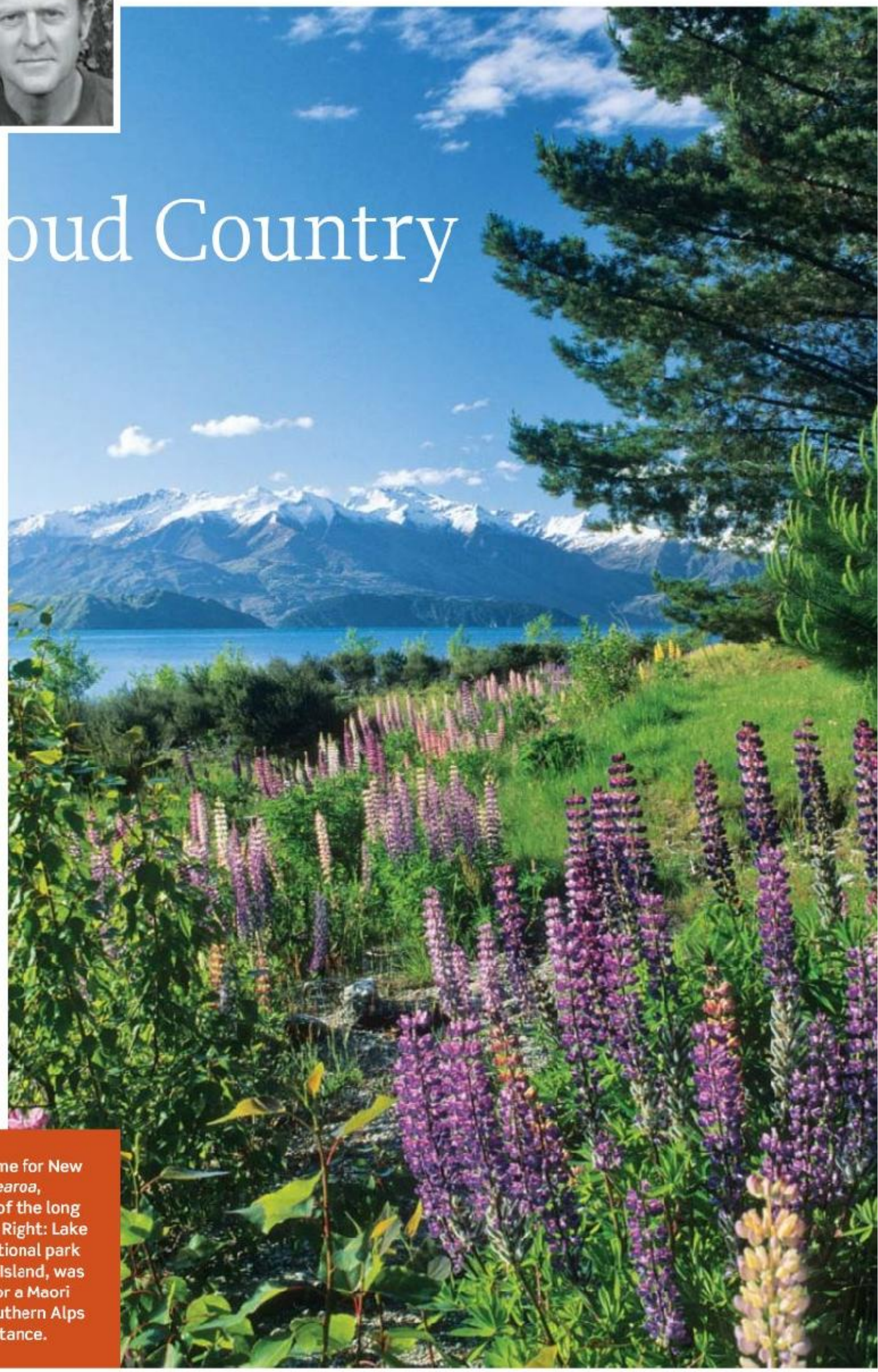
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PLANT HUNTER BY DAN HINKLEY

Long White Cloud Country



The Maori name for New Zealand, *Aotearoa*, means "land of the long white cloud." Right: Lake Wanaka, a national park on the South Island, was also named for a Maori chief. The Southern Alps rise in the distance.

JERRY HARPUR

I HAVE LONG MAINTAINED THAT IF STUDENTS of botany, which by default all gardeners and garden designers are, wish to sustain a lifelong excitement in plants and their associated marvels of adaptive strategies, then New Zealand is the last place they should travel. That loaded statement should be interpreted literally. Experiencing it too soon in life might be equated to traveling to the moon before visiting New York City.

Like emerald green rafts, the two main islands of New Zealand seemingly drift in the South Pacific for some 1,000 miles on a north-south axis. The geography is a dramatic and dumbfounding blend of mountains, volcanoes, boiling rivers and glaciers confronting palm-lined coasts, Jurassic-like forests and alpine meadows stippled with "flocks" of vegetable sheep (*Raoulia eximia*).

It's not a big country—slightly larger than the UK—and is, relatively speaking, quite close to Antarctica. This extreme latitude would suggest to the uninitiated a moderate to low number of plant species with a bias towards bone hardiness. There are forces of climate and current here, however, that have seen fit to cast those expectations to the wind, with one of most uninhibited temperate rain forests in the world found along the western coastline of the South Island.

Though the flora of this planet is always affected by intricate conversations with asso-



ciated fauna and climatic conditions, island ecology tends to be a little bit more over the top in this regard. Genetic isolation coupled with a finite substrate on which to eke out a living has resulted in unique, fanciful life forms. Whether on Ulleung Island in the Sea of Japan, the Galápagos, Mauritius or Hawaii, examples of highly specialized birds, mammals and plants abound.

New Zealand is no different in this regard, with over 80 percent of its plant species occurring here and nowhere else on earth. Yet the engineering of evolution that took place in New Zealand possesses an idiosyncratic quality that propels its ecology into otherworldliness, recently elevated to movie celebrity status as the realm of Tolkien's Middle Earth.

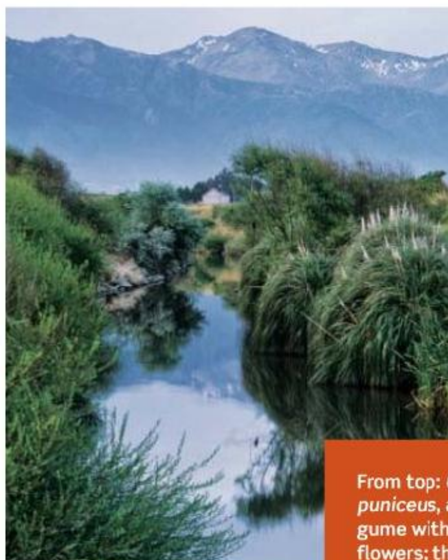
Many believe it was the dominant flightless bird, the moa, that acted as the primary sculptor of the floral landscape of these islands, joined in part by the land's vulnerability to relentless blows from the Antarctic. Before the Polynesians arrived about 1,000 years ago, at least 11 species of this bird, ranging in height from a turkey to a Bradley tank, nipped and tucked the plant forms into mystifying strategies of survival. Ultimately, it was the plants that won the long-fought battle, as the fearless birds were wiped out in relatively short order after the arrival of their first mammalian predator, *Homo sapiens*.

One tactic the plants of New Zealand employed to outwit their feathered browsers is known as polymorphism. This strategy took advantage of tough, inedible leaves during youth, with a midlife change of character once the plants were tall enough to hold their own against the enemy. Two species of pseudopanax exemplify this ploy in a most fantastic manner. *Pseudopanax ferox* and *P. crassifolius* produce unbranched, stiffly upright columns to 10 feet, clad with extremely narrow and long leaves with a texture of dried leather or rusted metal, almost as if Salvador Dalí had been given a pair of tin snips and permission to create a life form from cast-off sheet metal.

Both species evoke one of two responses: 1) Are they plants? Or 2) Are they real? Though in adult form they lose their unique character, in adolescence the two species deserve greater attention in North America, if only as containerized specimens in climates that cannot accommodate their needs outdoors.

With the genus phormium becoming increasingly popular for use throughout much of North America, it is exciting to encounter it in its native habitat. The lower elevation and most common species, *Phormium tenax*, interestingly takes on the ecological capacity of cattails or reeds in the moist wetland territory. These encircle every moist bog and fen, and oftentimes are seen emerging from standing water. The evergreen blades to six feet are handsomely mirrored in the water to a most astonishing and unexpected effect.

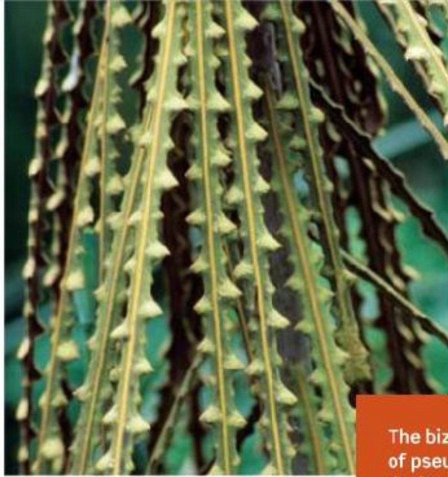
Both in the alpine zones of the mountains and on the drier eastern slopes of the South Island, the native shrubby plants have taken





From top: *Clianthus puniceus*, a shrubby legume with red claw-like flowers; the New Zealand wilderness of lakes, plains and mountains; the divaricated growth habit and yellow flowers of *Corokia cotoneaster*.

LEFT PAGE: MARIANNE MAJERUS (2); JERRY HARPUR. RIGHT PAGE: JERRY HARPUR



on a rather unique habit of growth known as divarication. This is characterized by extremely small leaves, mostly evergreen, held along fine, often stiff branches produced in a zigzag pattern. It is perhaps best illustrated by *Corokia cotoneaster*, an evergreen member of the dogwood family. The shrub produces a finely textured maze of dark-colored branches carrying tiny gray-green foliage and a haze of yellow flowers in early spring. In cultivation, it makes for good conversation and is easily grown in a container.

Nothing could have prepared me for what the carrot family, or Apiaceae, has done for itself in New Zealand. The genus aciphylla is represented by 39 species that occur here and nowhere else, and might be best thought of as this hemisphere's answer to the agave. So treacherous are these plants that reports of human injuries from accidental falls upon them are not uncommon. From a cautious distance they are spectacular plants, with dissected and razor-pointed foliage in yellowish green to startling blue, forming substantial mounds to three feet, from which arise spires of white to yellow-green flowers. At the base of Mount Cook on the South Island, during my visit, along the clear glacial streams, the bright yellow racemes of *Aciphylla scott-thomsonii* were just beginning to erupt to a towering height of four feet from its frightening armor of stiff blue foliage. I am successfully cultivating aciphylla in my Zone 8 Pacific Northwest garden; however, its success is utterly dependent on sharp-draining soils.

Near mountain streams at the base of Mount Cook, as well as on Arthur's Pass west of Christchurch, one will encounter a plant emblematic of New Zealand. I was ecstatic to see the so-called Mount Cook lily (*Ranunculus lyallii*), at its apogee of blossom, with large, pristine white flowers atop stems to two feet, rising above robust mounds of handsome leathery-textured rounded leaves. I have attempted this species numerous times, unsuccessfully, in the Pacific Northwest and was ready to declare it impossible to cultivate until I stumbled upon gallon-sized plants, in blossom no less, at a fruit stand not far from where we live. I hate it when that happens.

The bizarre early growth of pseudopanax is designed to be inedible to predators. Once the plant is tall enough to survive on its own, it changes form completely, a survival strategy called polymorphism.

Somewhat lower in elevation from the richly clad alpine meadows of hebes, celmisas, bronze sedges and assorted grasses are dense beguiling forests comprised chiefly of an evergreen beech, *Nothofagus solandri*. This species, carrying small, glossy green leaves, does not reach the respectable girth and height of its counterparts in South America, though the tangle of near-white stems provides miles of near-mystical hiking, accentuated further still if one hears the haunting chortle of the kea, the

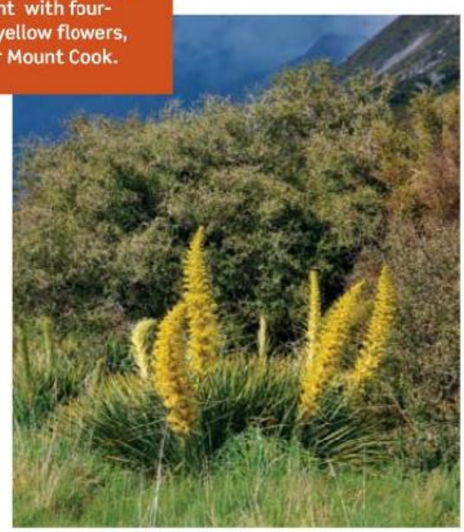
world's only alpine parrot, as it flies overhead.

Clianthus puniceus, though now rare in nature, is still found on the eastern shores of the North Island. When in blossom in late winter, this shrubby legume carrying clawlike flowers of brilliant red, becomes a focus of admiration in my house, as it grows directly outside the glass walls of our dining room. White and pink forms of this shrub are commercially available, although, as they are so inferior to the red form, I must pose the question: Why?

The drawback of such precise glove-fitting—that of adapted biomass to limited landmass—is that it takes very little interruption to wreak havoc. What has happened to New Zealand could never be characterized as little: In an attempt to make New Zealand seem more like home, the British colonists remade Eden by introducing nearly every known species of European songbird to the island. When the enormity of that mistake was realized, stoats were introduced in an attempt to control the new birds and other avalanching introduced species, thereby decimating populations of native flightless birds. An Australian possum introduced for fur continues to ravage colonies of metrosideros, whose flaming flowers of red ignite the coastal forests of both islands in spring.

Even though tainted by unwise actions, New Zealand's flora and fauna, now highly protected and cherished, remain among the most diverse, fanciful and exaggeratedly beautiful on earth. It is an inventory not to be missed in one's life—nor experienced when too young.

Not your ordinary carrot—in New Zealand the familiar genus aciphylla takes on a new character in the form of *A. scott-thomsonii*, a dangerously spiky plant with four-foot-tall yellow flowers, seen near Mount Cook.


DAN HINKLEY

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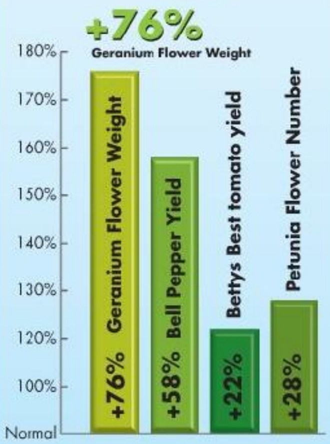
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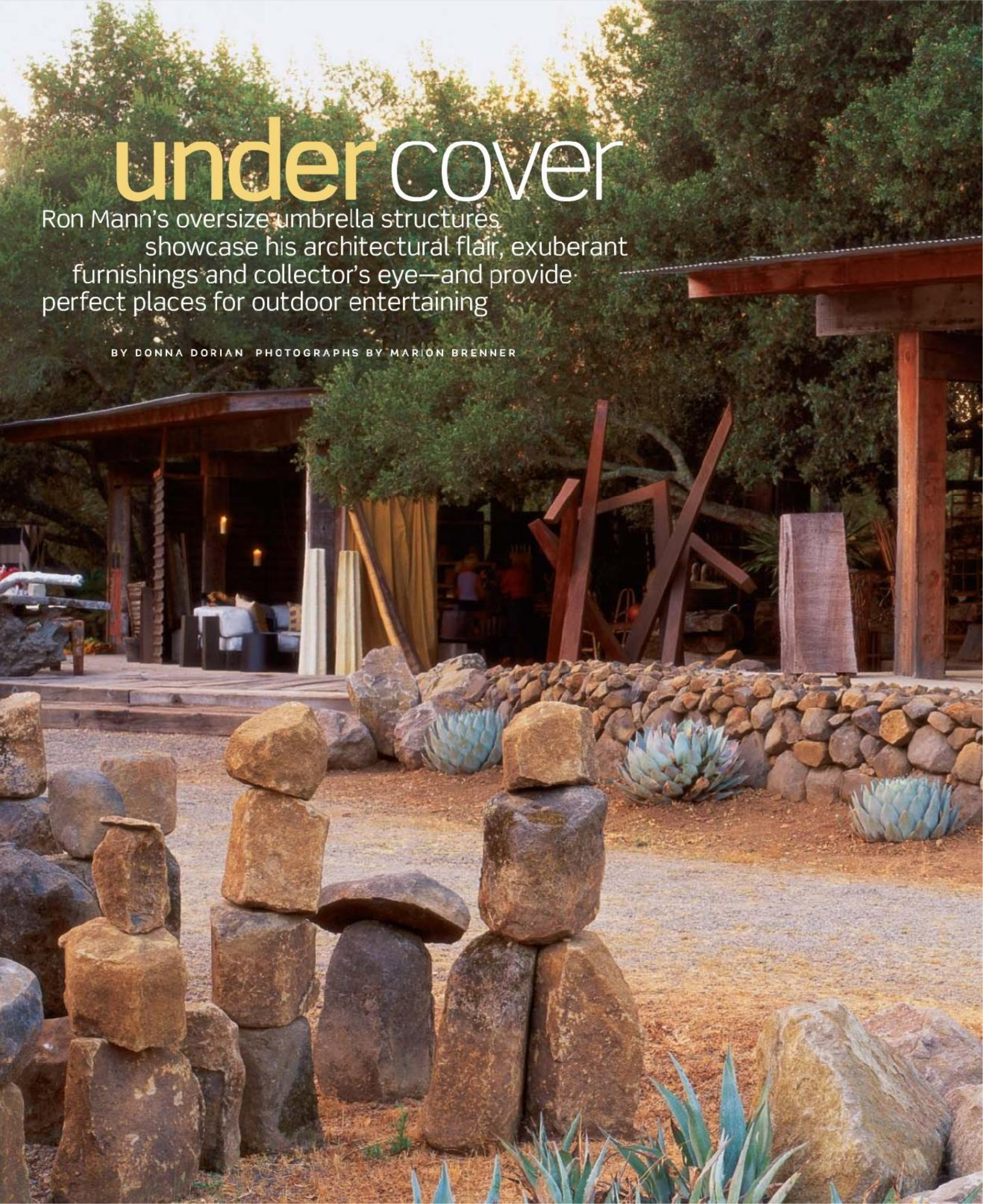
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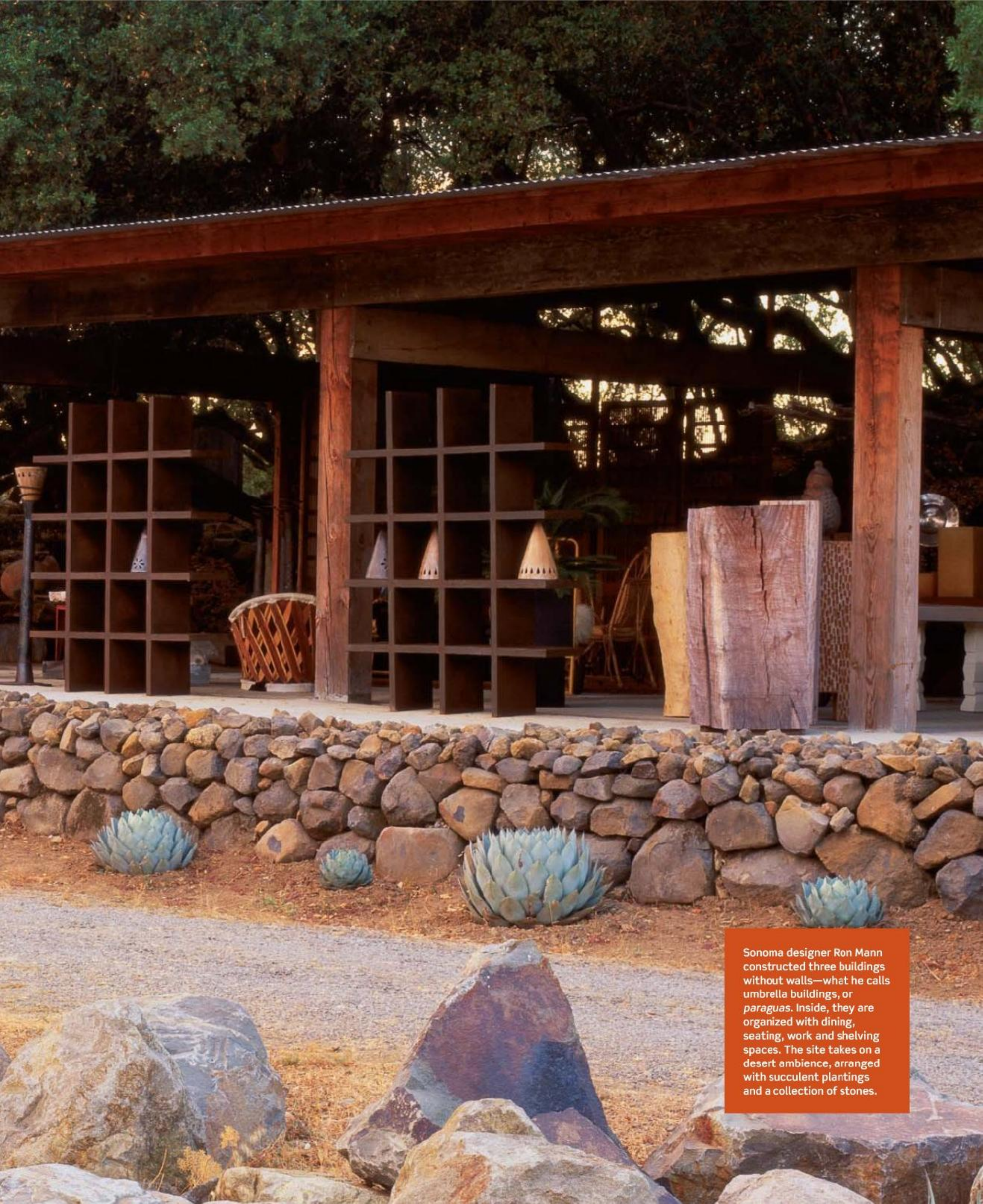
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under cover

Ron Mann's oversize umbrella structures showcase his architectural flair, exuberant furnishings and collector's eye—and provide perfect places for outdoor entertaining

BY DONNA DORIAN PHOTOGRAPHS BY MARION BRENNER





Sonoma designer Ron Mann constructed three buildings without walls—what he calls umbrella buildings, or *paraguas*. Inside, they are organized with dining, seating, work and shelving spaces. The site takes on a desert ambience, arranged with succulent plantings and a collection of stones.

Artist, designer and self-styled architect Ron Mann



has held his place in the design world

for decades now. Known for his brazen and honest vision and for making creative living environments, he lives on a 10-acre farm on an upper valley site in Sonoma, California. Part atelier, part homestead, the farm that he and his wife Louise—a talented designer in her own right—call Terre Bleue is a natural complement and wellspring for his work. Here in summer, sweeps of lavender take over a field, while art objects and odd lost and founds rear their forms between tall grasses. As if Ron were more committed to living on the land than domesticating the place, his home, more cabin than house, is small and improvisational.

About six years ago, Ron decided he needed more space where he could work, entertain and show his designs to prospective clients. Thinking big, as is his manner, he devised a series of what he calls umbrella buildings or *paraguas* (the Spanish word for umbrellas). Free-standing, open to the air, and each taking between eight and 10 days to construct, the huge structures—30 feet wide by 60 feet long and 16 feet high—were built primarily from recycled wood and set with galvanized metal roofs. When one comes upon them suddenly from the woods, they appear like a barrio—made eloquent, clean and present.

During the week, Ron keeps his work table and materials under the paraguas, protected from the rain and the heat. But with a quick tidying up, the shelters are easily transformed into fabulous rooms for entertaining. "I like large volume combined with absolute simplicity," says Ron of the space, which is arranged with his own architectonic designs and primitive pieces that he and Louise have collected from their travels in Indonesia and Africa. "My designs have a lot of Louis Quatorze in them," he says. "They are like one great celebration."

Like the paraguas themselves, the uncommon objects inside are over-scaled, sculptural, exuberant, their colors in concert with the palette of nature. "My designs are all about livability," comments Ron. "The more you live with them, the more you care about them because they are made from natural materials. If I make things like that, they are timeless. I like to make designs that will endure."

■ *For more information on the work of Ron Mann, see ronmanndesign.com, e-mail rmd@ronmanndesign.com, or call 707-935-3991.*



Left: Under one paraguas, Ron Mann placed a collection of African-made furniture and complemented it with modular teak screens, copied from 100-year-old California fruit-drying racks. Right: An old ironmonger's work bench, called a hickory table, works well as an outdoor buffet at a party.







Above: On the wooden terrace between two paraguas, an arrangement of primitive, hand-hewn objects includes a Mexican bird cage and a long planter carved with flowers that is used as a wine cooler for parties. Below: Handsome tree-trunk pedestals made by artist and farm manager Jeronimo Perez.



Like an open loft space, with exposed architectural cross beams functioning as an interesting ceiling, this paraguas interior is decorated in an eclectic style with a round African marriage chair big enough for two, and pieces designed by Ron Mann, including tables made from contrasting woods.





Over-scaled and sustainable, sand-blasted redwood armchairs and a sofa upholstered in Sunbrella fabric seat guests in the courtyard amid the three paraguas. A half-moon steel sculpture doubles as a seat. "When I make a piece of furniture, my first criterion always is that it is usable and comfortable," says Ron Mann.



eco-friendly fabrics

Great minds think alike—and Ron and Louise Mann have always worked hand in hand. Note this Douglas fir outdoor bed designed by Ron and draped with Louise's eco-friendly outdoor fabrics. Made from industrial hemp these outdoor fabrics point to the future in their avoidance of acrylic, a fabric that can go through a very un-green process when dyed. "What makes a product eco-friendly is not just the product, but the whole process of making it," says Louise. Industrial hemp fits the bill: It grows fast without fertilizers, and the fiber it produces is naturally UV- and mildew- resistant. Printed with black and white dyes (to date, the only colors that are colorfast) on natural or bleached hemp in five bold patterns, they possess a texture similar to Belgian linen, which makes the fabrics a joy to see as well as touch. Call 415-551-9798 or see houseofmann.com.



Ron Mann (center) stands in as bartender at the party, serving up local wine and conversation behind the portable bar made from slabs of stone and decorated with primitive art objects. A series of woven chandeliers available through House of Mann is suspended from the branches of the tree.



Set out on a series of elevated decks at the far end of one of the paraguas, simple plank indoor/outdoor chairs, painted to complement the colors of nature, are the result of Ron's quest to create a pure design of a chair. He also designed the chaises and the shelving, which are available by commission.





Walls of Silverdale limestone, set to look dry stacked, are the architecture that delineates one space from another. A fruit tunnel in powder-coated steel supports 'Karmijn de Sonneville' apples, and leads to a quiet bench overlooking the sunken garden.

BY VALERIE EASTON PHOTOGRAPHS BY RICHARD FELBER

DREAMS OF ITALY

A Mediterranean villa sits on a hill overlooking a lake. Terraced garden rooms filled with fruit and fragrance embrace the house, offering grand spaces for socializing and nooks for privacy. Welcome to the Seattle suburbs



MARY HORVITZ CARRIED AROUND A PHOTO OF A MEDITERRANEAN-STYLE HOUSE overlooking the water for more than 20 years. With the help of landscape architect David Pfeiffer, she and her husband Eric now live in just such a house, perched at the north end of Lake Washington and surrounded by fragrance- and food-rich gardens laid out in a series of terraces wrapped around the house.

Pumpkins and tomatoes ripen along the sidewalk; lofty sunflowers and silvery spikes of cardoon greet visitors to this sophisticated Eden in the waterside city of Kirkland, Washington, just across the lake from Seattle. Inside the garden gate, lemon trees, lilies and lavender perfume the air. Every microclimate in the quarter-acre, Zone 8 garden is used to grow vegetables like heirloom lettuce, fruit such as espaliered figs and herbs. Italian terra-cotta pots hold bay trees. Raspberry canes droop along walkways, offering golden and red berries for grazing as you wind your way from one intimate garden room to another.

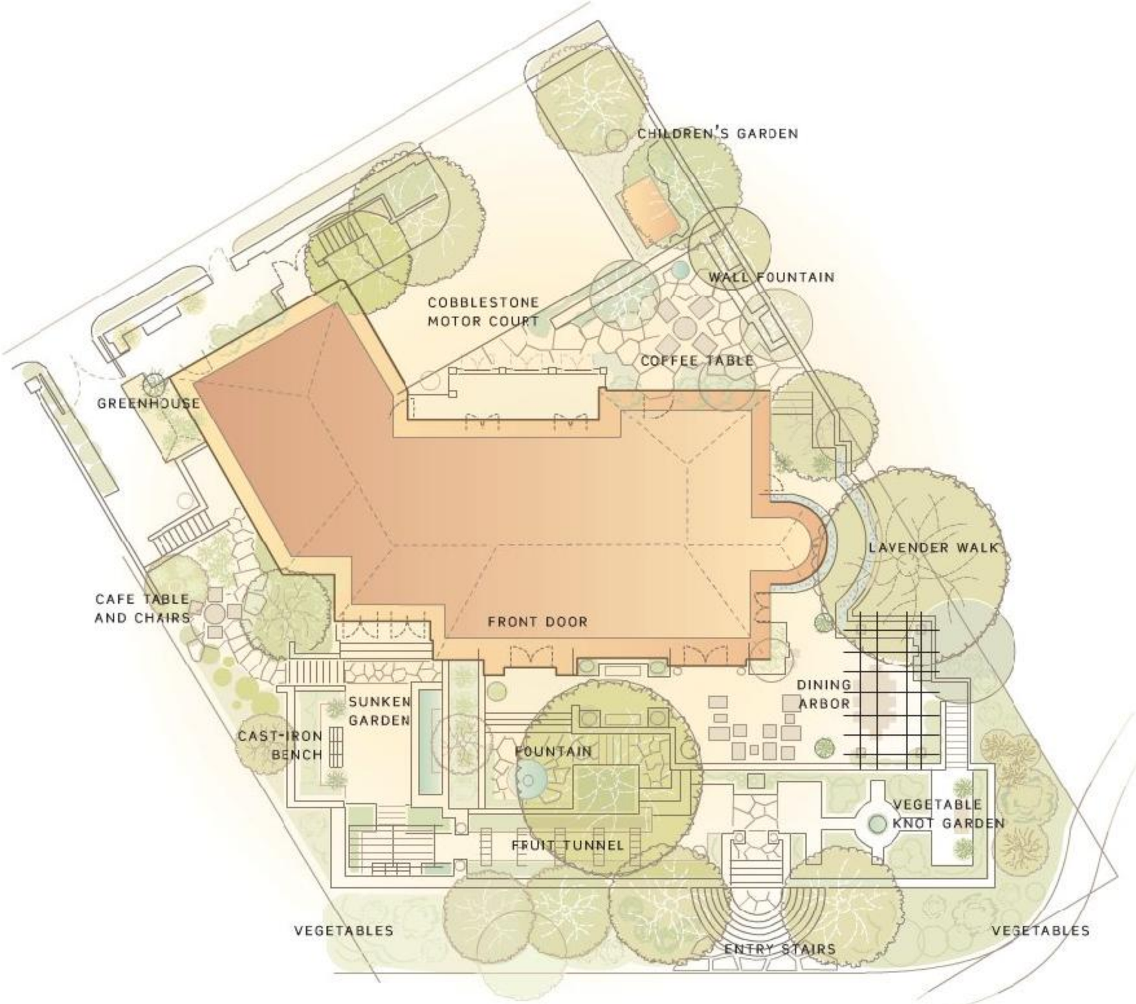
"It's so important to marry the architectural style of the house to the garden. The historic collaboration between Edwin Lutyens and Gertrude Jekyll was my inspiration for this garden," says Pfeiffer. The Horvitzes interviewed several landscape architects and immediately clicked with Pfeiffer. He was hired after the house was underway, and was quick to suggest that the Horvitzes needed to give more thought to the relationship between house and garden. How often does the design of the garden dictate the priorities of a project? But Pfeiffer's voice was heard: "That resonated with us, and we stopped the job for months," says Eric. A new architect and several years later, garden and house are one harmonious composition. "The goal was to create a classic-feeling European garden focusing on edibles rather than just ornamentals," explains Pfeiffer.

The garden's agrarian heart comes from Mary's conviction, stemming from her childhood in the Azores and Angola, that plants should earn their space by looking and smelling good. Mary and David chose varieties of edibles difficult or impossible to find in the market, resulting in an inspired mix of blueberries, huckleberries, black and white currants, piles of lettuces,



Right: The main terrace with views of the lake is perfect for entertaining large groups. 'Beryllia' chairs by J. Art Iron. Above left: A private landing spills over with 'Annabelle' hydrangeas. The Parisian cafe furniture reminds the client of his student days.





and plenty of Mary's favorite 'Sunburst' and 'Old German' tomatoes. Sweet Italian musk strawberries carpet the ground; germander hedges define the knot garden; and the fruit tunnel is laced with apples, plums and pears. Kumquats grow in French jardinières; prostrate rosemary drapes over walls.

Pfeiffer's greatest challenges were circulation and scale, because the property's grade change is 15 feet from sidewalk to front door, and the garden is small in relation to the three-story home. "I designed the garden to reveal itself slowly and purposefully," explains Pfeiffer, speaking of the seamless unfolding of garden rooms. "I want it to feel like a private, nurturing and magical place once you step through the entry gate." Mature Japanese snowbells (*Styrax japonica*) help tie the imposing house to its garden, as do the Virginia creeper and trumpet vines clambering up its creamy stone facade. The dining pavilion's hefty pergola creates an intermediate layer between house and earth. Everywhere, the architecture and stone surfaces are softened with an eclectic, sensual mix of grape vines, pewter-leaved *Rosa glauca*, feathery fennel and a lively, homey tumble of nasturtiums.

This successful blending of edibles and architecture has proved life-changing for all involved. Mary is living her decades-old dream. Eric, who works for Microsoft in the field of human cognition, says the garden's creation was a huge learning experience for him. "We weren't building just a house, but a living environment," he realized. And Pfeiffer has become so enamored with the ornamental potential of edible plants that he's incorporating vegetables and fruit into his own garden, as well as the brand-new landscape he's designing for the Horvitzes beach house on Whidbey Island.

■ *For more, see davidpfeiffer.com or e-mail studio@davidpfeiffer.com.*

ILLUSTRATION BRENDA WEAVER



The sunken garden outside the master suite is a formal space with white French-style ceramic urns and a cast-iron garden bench, c. 1850s French, sourced in New York. Lloyd Loom-style chaises tuck into the alcove. White star creeper fills gaps in the paving.









Left: In the vegetable garden tiny-leaved germander (*Teucrium chamaedrys*) makes a neat hedge. Above right: 'Interlaken', a white grape, winds around a column; a potted kumquat is underplanted with oregano 'Kent Beauty' and nasturtiums.

elegant edibles Grow organic—better for you and the planet. The smart approach is to target varieties not available in the supermarket and that taste better when picked fresh, like heirloom tomatoes, strawberries, lettuces and garlic.

- Alpine and Italian musk strawberries make delicious groundcovers, as they are quick to spread but aren't invasive. Plant both kinds of the Italian musks ('Profumata di tortona' and 'Capron') for best fruiting.
- Some edibles are more ornamental than others. Choose double-duty plants for maximum value in the garden: Purple tomatillos are beautiful and make great salsa; blueberries have vivid fall color; the golden forms of oregano and marjoram are good groundcovers that can be clipped for cooking.
- Use architectural edibles, like leeks, onions, garlic, artichokes and cardoons, for punctuation and structure. Stagger a series of early to late varieties of garlic to harvest from early summer through fall.
- Cover arbors with seedless table grapes, choosing at least one purple ('Glenora') and one green ('Interlaken') variety for contrast and flavor.
- *Actinidia arguta* is a hardy, bite-sized kiwi with fruit that can be popped into your mouth like grapes (you need both a male and a female vine).
- Plant dwarf fruit trees as espaliers against a sunny south-facing wall, or train over a trellis to create a dramatic, easily harvested fruit tunnel.
- Plant nasturtiums everywhere to fill any gaps.
- See Rainbirdnursery.com for excellent edibles.

BY JOANNA FORTNAM

PHOTOGRAPHS BY RICHARD FELBER





POT **POWER!**

A sideline interest in playing with plants led two container-gardening divas into a world of color and texture—now their distinctive style is recognizable at 100 paces

SEATTLE PRODUCES PLANT GEEKS LIKE DALLAS PRODUCES cowboys, so it's quite an achievement in this horticentric town for Tina Dixon (above, left) and her collaborator Marsha Davis-Thomsen (right), to have made a name for themselves as divas of the container world. Both women are former office drones who tired of the gray cubicle life. Tina struck out first and set up Plants a la Cart, a service maintaining office plants and interiors; Marsha followed suit with her own business. As Tina gained confidence she opened up to the limitless creative possibilities of pots. Now, when Tina and Marsha work together, they bounce ideas around, debating texture, balance and color, while keeping the display horticulturally real. The results are glorious, bursting-at-the-seams visions of pot power.

■ *For more information on Tina Dixon, call Plants a la Cart at 425-481-2194; for Marsha Davis-Thomsen, call 206-914-6263.*

MOLTEN **LAVA**

Centerpieces: *Canna* 'Black Knight'; *Anigozanthos* Kanga™ Orange; unidentified red and yellow helenium; *Aeonium* 'Zwartkop'
Accents & Trailers: Ornamental pepper; *Ipomoea batatas* 'Blackie'; *Lantana* 'Dallas Red'; *Crocosmia* x *crocosmiiflora* 'Emberglow'; *Ophiopogon planiscapus* 'Nigrescens'
Container: Rectangle in lava glaze with gunmetal drip from AW Pottery. See Sources, page 86.

"Repeating the container colors (burnt orange, for example) in the flowers connects the composition, and the complementary colors (orange on a blue background) intensify each other."—**TD**





COOL SUCCULENTS

Centerpieces: *Sophora microphylla; Astelia chathamica*
Accents & Trailers: *Rhipsalis cruciformis; Aeonium arboreum*
Container: Soy bowl in blue glaze from AW Pottery. Custom blue glass pieces from Molbak's. See Sources, page 86.

"An inner pot holds the tender succulents and can be lifted out and into the greenhouse for cold Pacific Northwest winters. Succulents are low maintenance (no deadheading) and low water use (once a week). The Chihuly-style pieces of blue glass connect the planting to the container and add color you may miss from lack of flowers."—TD

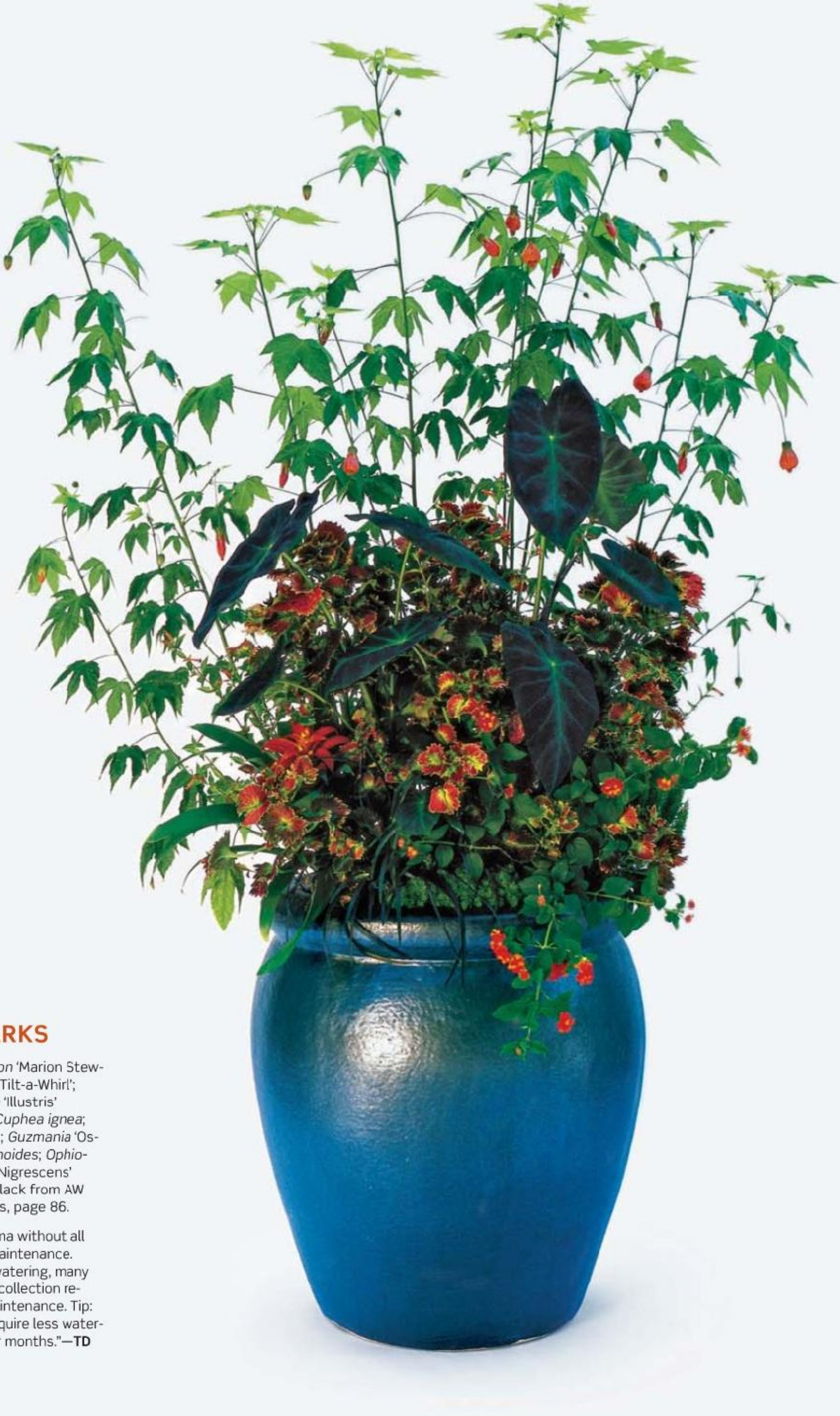




AMBER **GLOW**

Centerpieces: *Canna* Tropicanna®; *Foeniculum vulgare* 'Purpureum'; *Cuphea ignea*; *Alonzoa meridionalis*
Accents & Trailers: *Pelargonium peltatum* 'Ruby Dream'; *Euphorbia cyparissias*; *Actaea simplex* 'Black Negligée'; *Solenostemon* 'Othello'
Container: Classic, in lava glaze from AW Pottery. Sources, page 86.

"Cuphea (cigar plant) is a great filler and is now available in red, orange, yellow, pink, and pink with purple. The surprise element is that the pelargonium buds will soon break and introduce more color."—**MDT**



FLYING **SPARKS**

Centepieces: *Abutilon* 'Marion Stewart'; *Solenostemon* 'Tilt-a-Whirl'; *Colocasia esculenta* 'Illustris'
Accents & Trailers: *Cuphea ignea*; *Verbena* 'Dallas Red'; *Guzmania* 'Ostara'; *Saxifraga hypnoides*; *Ophiopogon planiscapus* 'Nigrescens'
Container: Vaso in black from AW Pottery. See Sources, page 86.

"You can create drama without all the drama of high maintenance. Other than regular watering, many of the plants in this collection require no summer maintenance. Tip: Larger containers require less watering over the summer months."—**TD**



FUNKY **SILHOUETTE**

Centerpieces: *Aeonium arboreum*; *Pelargonium* x *hortorum* 'Tricolor'
Accents & Trailers: *Saxifraga hypnoides*; *Ipomoea batatas* 'Blackie'; *Senecio rowleyanus*
Container: Tall black oval from Bamford & Bamford.
See Sources, page 86.

"Fancyleaf pelargoniums such as this one are very useful in mostly foliage displays—their multiple colors inject a jazzy note and the flowers are a bonus."—**MDT**



SHINE A **LIGHT**

Centerpieces: *Aspidistra elatior* 'Milky Way'; *Asparagus densiflorus* 'Sprengeri'
Accents & Trailers: *Impatiens omeiana*; *Solenostemon* 'Burgundy Wedding Train'; *Begonia* Non-Stop® Deep Red and Scarlet
Container: Tina and Marsha call it "The Purse," a bulbous oval shape in black from Ravenna Gardens. See Sources, right.

"The large center plant, *Aspidistra elatior* 'Milky Way', is generally considered a houseplant in the Pacific Northwest. But I've seen it survive nicely into the high 20s in protected areas. Tip: In warm months, use other indoor plants to expand your plant palette, like tender ferns, begonias, peace lily or string of beads."—**TD**

design tips & sources: ■ Tina and Marsha favor texture—that is, contrasting foliage—over flowers. This way, the design is not dependent on fleeting blooms and is easier to maintain. Think in terms of bold, medium and soft, and balance feathery leaves with bold. ■ When it comes to color, repetition is key: If you've used a yellow upright plant, use the same color in a trailing one. ■ Succulents are great for water-wise plantings; you can incorporate them into lusher mixes if you preserve their root ball and position them away from irrigation lines. ■ Containers with busy glazes or designs often look best with simple plantings. ■ Plants from: City People's, Seattle (citypeoples.com); Molbak's, Woodinville (molbaks.com); Ravenna Gardens, multiple locations (ravennagardens.com); Steamboat Island Nursery, Olympia (steamboatislandnursery.com); Wells Medina Nursery, Medina (wellsmedinanursery.com). ■ Pots from: AW Pottery (awpottery.com); Bamford & Bamford (bambampots.com).



SEATTLE **WELCOME**

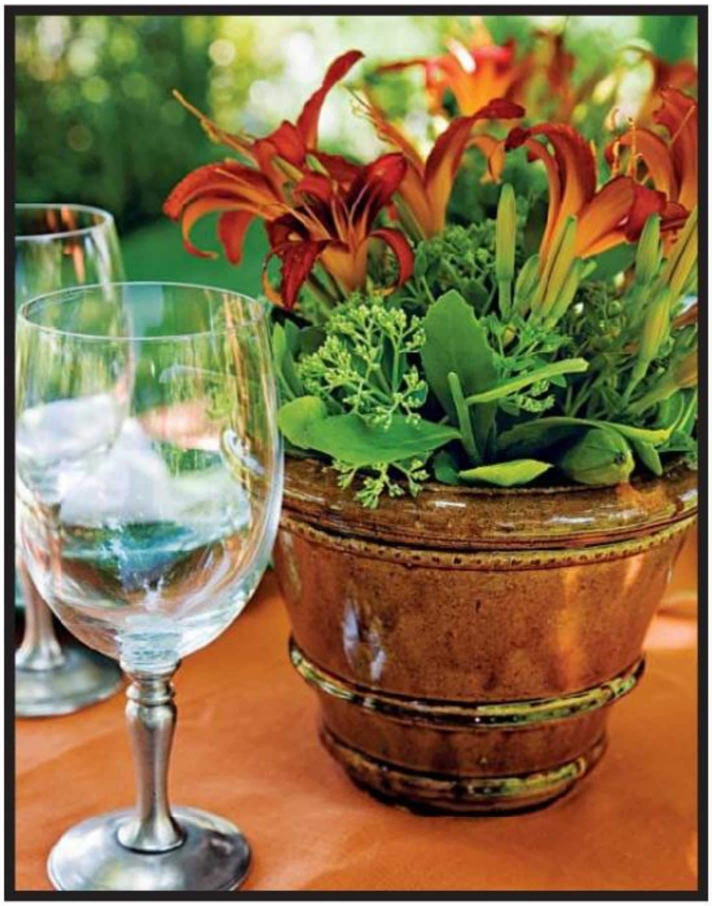
Centerpieces: *Fuchsia* 'Maxima'; *Hosta* 'Gold Standard'
Accents & Trailers: *Asparagus densiflorus* 'Sprengeri'; *Polystichum polyblepharum*
Container: "Ta Prohm" waffle finish pot in blue glaze from AW Pottery. See Sources, page 86.

"In shady spots, interest can come from texture. Use variegated foliage (lime, yellow or white) to brighten and show off other plants. Tip: Create height by staking fuchsias (pictured), heliotrope, and other lax or trailing plants."—**MDT**



Jon Carloftis toasts his friends at a summer party he hosted at his Bucks County, Pennsylvania, home. For the event, he moved his picnic table under an allée of pear trees that leads to his front door, and picked daylilies and sedum (right) from his garden to make the floral arrangements for the table.

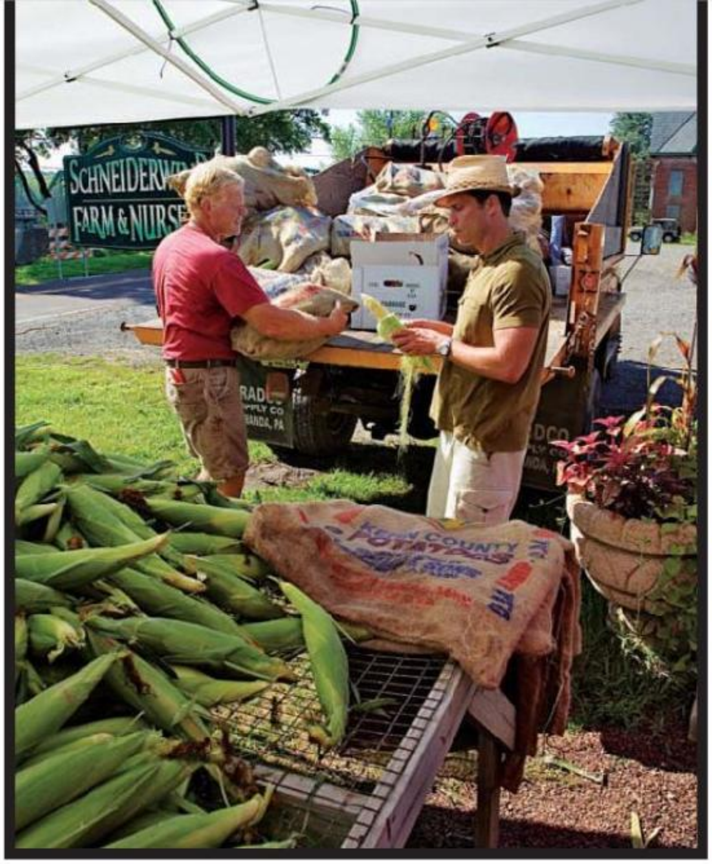




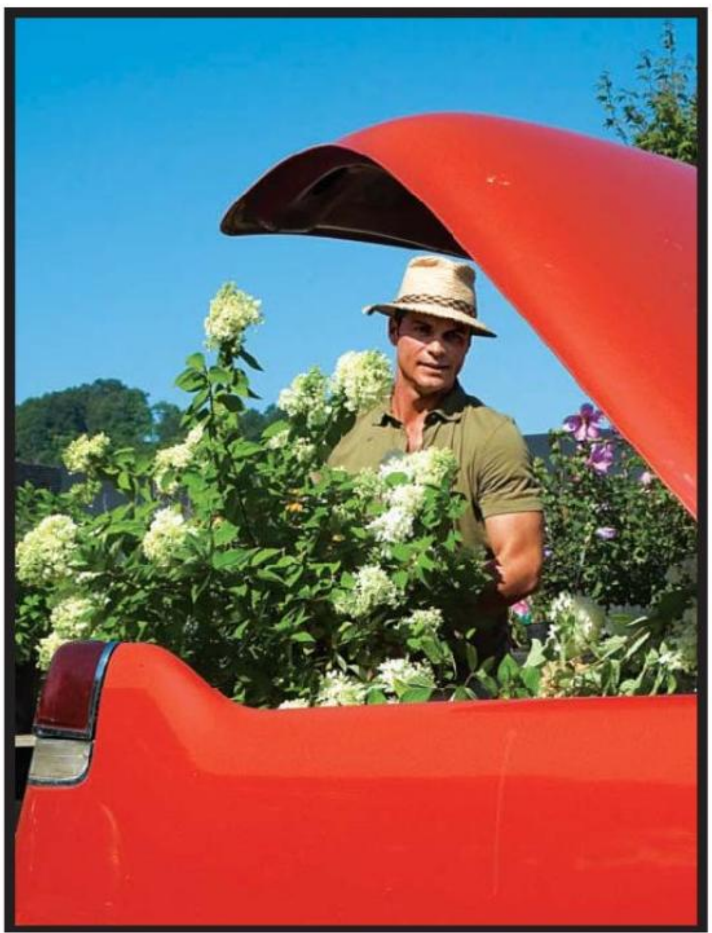
PARTY CENTRAL

Garden designer Jon Carloftis throws a country-style garden party for friends and neighbors at his Bucks County home with his inimitable hands-on, easy-does-it style

BY DONNA DORIAN PHOTOGRAPHS BY ANDRE BARANOWSKI



"I LOVE TO ENTERTAIN—I GREW UP THAT WAY. BUT I NEVER PLAN TOO MUCH. I LIKE TO GO AND JUST DO IT. THAT'S MY PHILOSOPHY"



A GARDEN DESIGNER WHO SPECIALIZES IN SMALL CITY gardens and country places, Jon Carloftis loves to entertain almost as much as he likes to keep things easy. Born and raised in Kentucky—and still very much a Kentucky man at heart—he moved to New York in 1988, but knew he needed a country house to call his own. Finally, in Bucks County, Pennsylvania, he found an old house "so ugly no one wanted it," says Jon. "Now, it's the last house I'll ever own."

Framed by a picket fence along the front yard, with a pear tree allée that leads from the detached garage to the porch, the house has become his failproof testing grounds for outdoor entertaining, where his relaxed, easygoing style is always at play. For each new party, he remakes the presentation, moving the picnic table to a different area in the yard, choosing the colors of the season to accent his tabletops, making floral arrangements from the plants in bloom. "It's all about using what's on hand," says Jon. "If you wait for everything to be perfect, you'll never do a thing. What's important is to enjoy yourself and your friends, and to have a lot of fun." Come on over.

■ *For more information, see joncarloftis.com.*



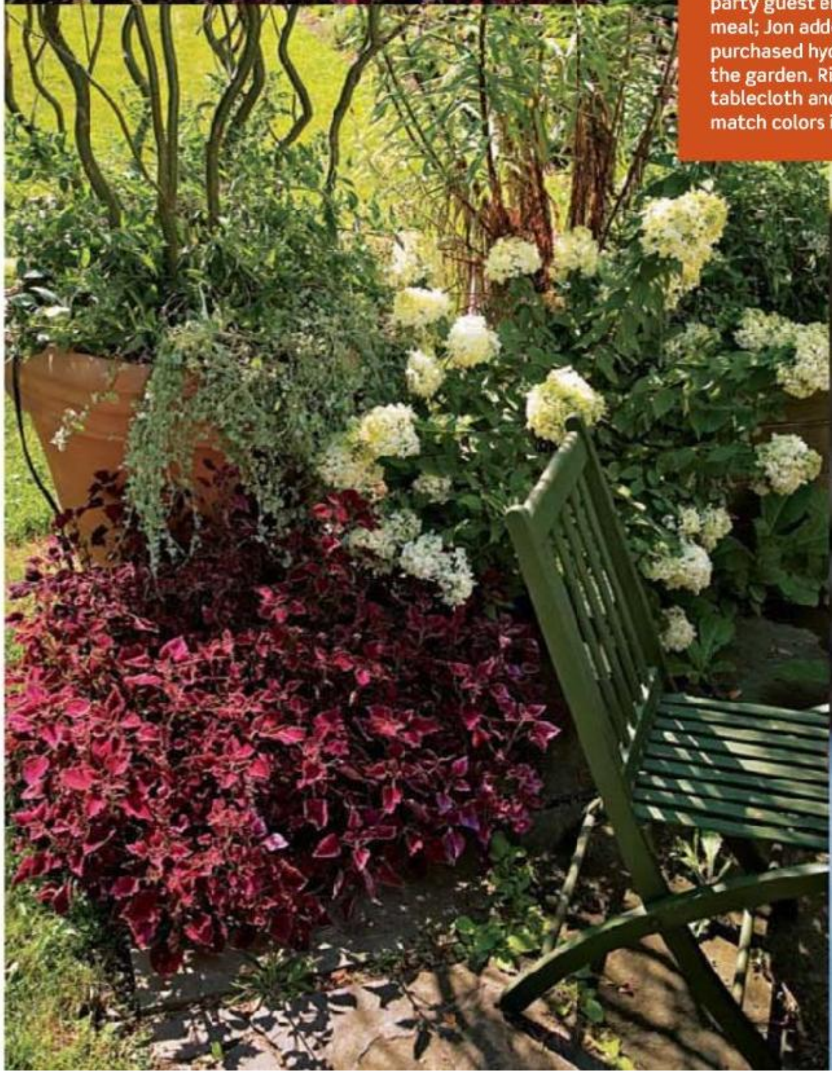


Here: Hors d'oeuvres were served indoors on an old farm table decorated with a vase of hydrangeas, allium and clematis. Far left: To prepare for the party, Jon shopped for corn and hydrangeas at Schneiderwind Farm and Nursery, the local family-owned farm stand just down the road.





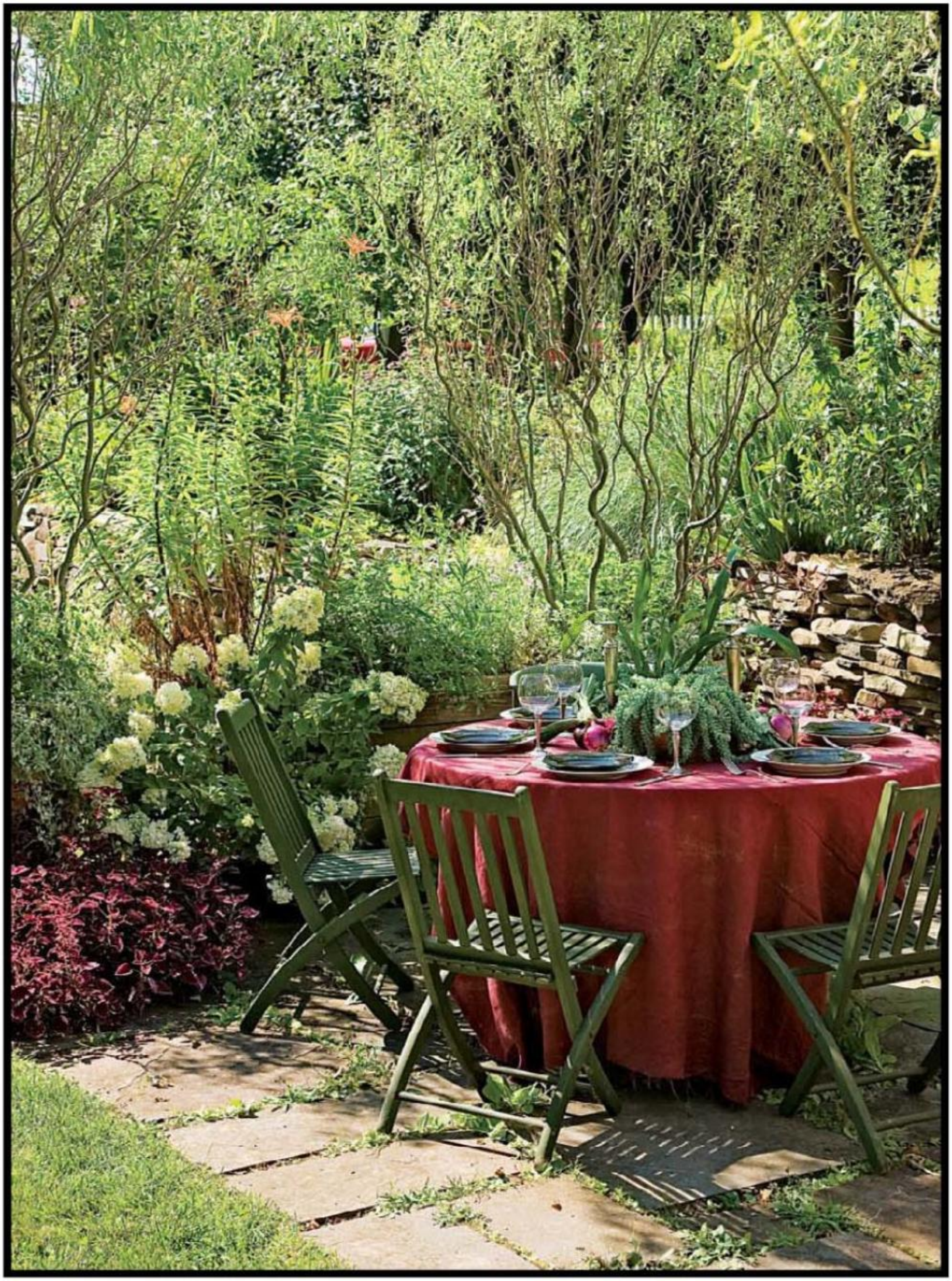
Clockwise from top left: A second table was set at the step-down level of the terraced garden; Jon decorated it simply with burro's tail; party guest enjoyed the meal; Jon added his newly purchased hydrangea to the garden. Right: The rose tablecloth and green chairs match colors in the garden.





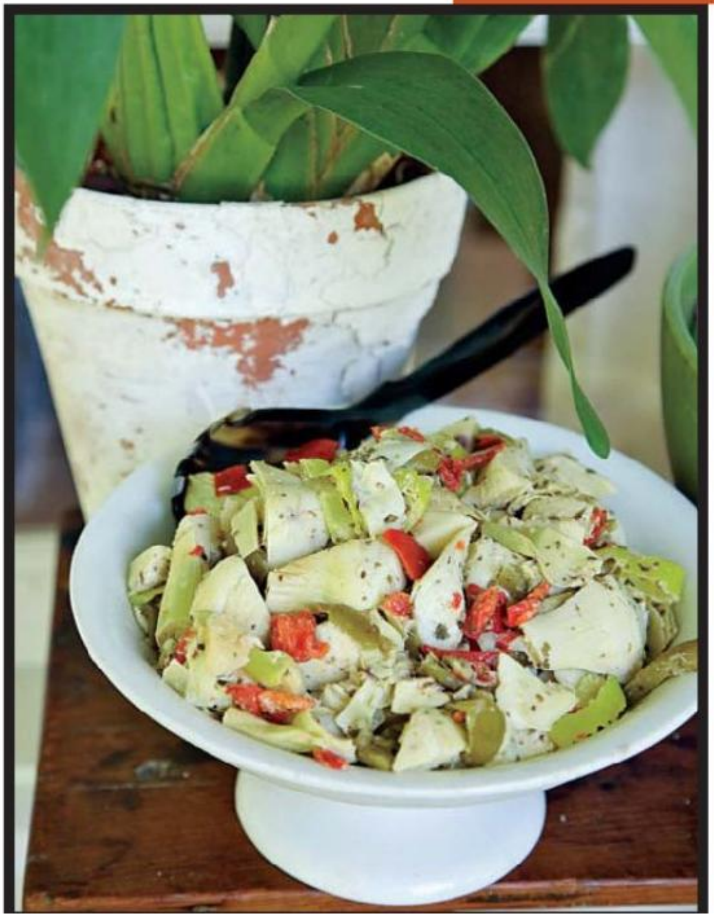








Above: Jon came up with a great idea for a buffet table when he brought his three-tiered library ladder out on the porch. Wild salmon held pride of place on the middle tier, with a selection of easy-to-serve fresh salads. Below: Even on a small shelf, Jon found room to ornament the food with a planter.



party tips from a pro:

- If you love to entertain and you love to garden, entertain outdoors—where you can show people your garden and let everyone enjoy the warm summer weather.
- Keep it easy. Use what you have on hand.
- Develop new ideas for a party every time you entertain—be it color or theme or the placement of the furniture. Be innovative, but keep it natural—for example, on a hot day, set your table underneath a tree. Then there is no need for an umbrella.
- Be strict with color. Pick a color or two and stick with them throughout your table settings and flower arrangements.
- Decorate your garden party with seasonal flowers and foliage from your garden and then decorate your tabletop to match. Remember that cut stems from vines out of bloom make terrific accents for bouquets and vases.
- If you need extra flowers for a party, buy a collection of new plants in bloom, rather than cut stems, and replant them in the garden later. It will keep the memory of the party alive for a long time too.
- Comfortable seating where people can relax and enjoy themselves is a must. And don't worry if you don't have enough outdoor chairs—bring them out from indoors, and if you need more, borrow from your neighbors.
- Be innovative with food presentation. Here the library ladder doubled as a buffet table and became a conversation piece.

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Hosted by the San Francisco Botanical Garden Society (www.sfbotanicalgarden.org), the March 20 opening night party for the San Francisco Flower & Garden Show at Cow Palace gave guests a first look at display gardens created by the Bay Area's best talent. *Garden Design's* own garden was designed for the second year in a row by Michele Swanson of Cultivate Art Design (cltv8artdesign.com) and built by Thomas Raeth of Lafayette Tree & Landscape, Inc. (laftree.com).

Southern Spring Home & Garden Show



Kevin James speaking to attendees in his Charleston Shade Garden.

From February 27th to March 4th, Charlotte's Southern Spring Home & Garden Show highlighted the best in traditional and contemporary design for an audience of over 60,000 attendees. Landscape designer Kevin James' Charleston Shade Garden featured furniture from our sponsor, Summer Classics. *Garden Design* also hosted a Living in Luxury Day with speakers Judy Glattstein and Robert Bowden.

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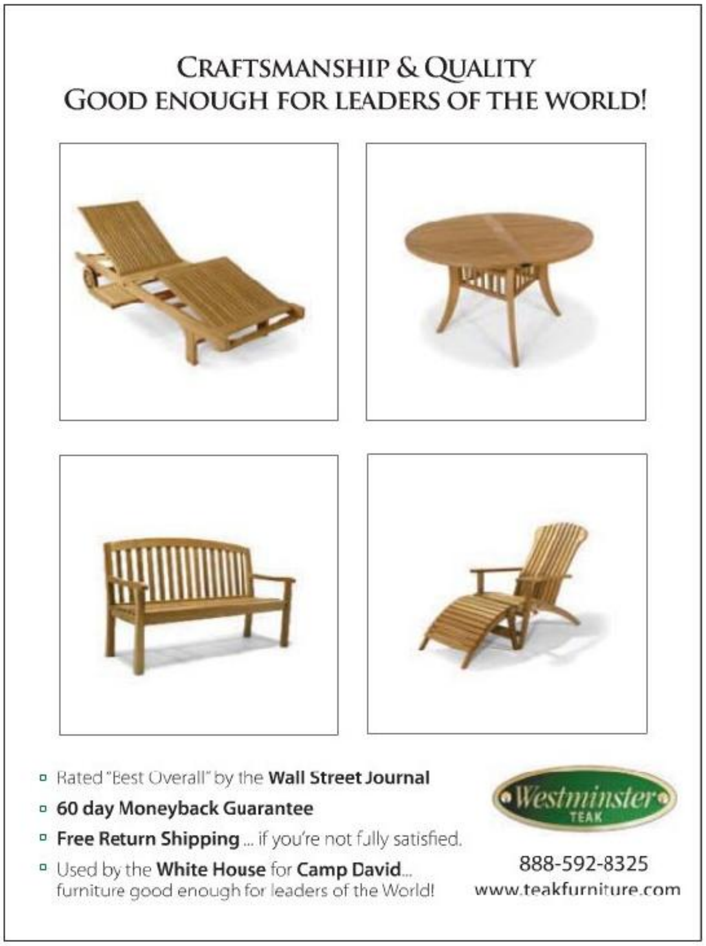
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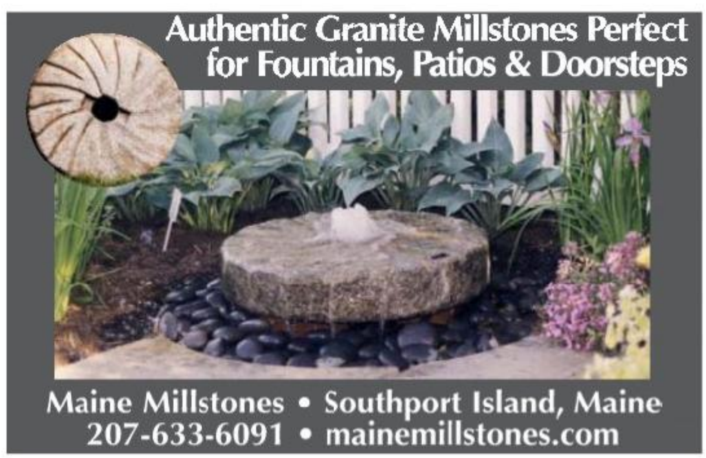

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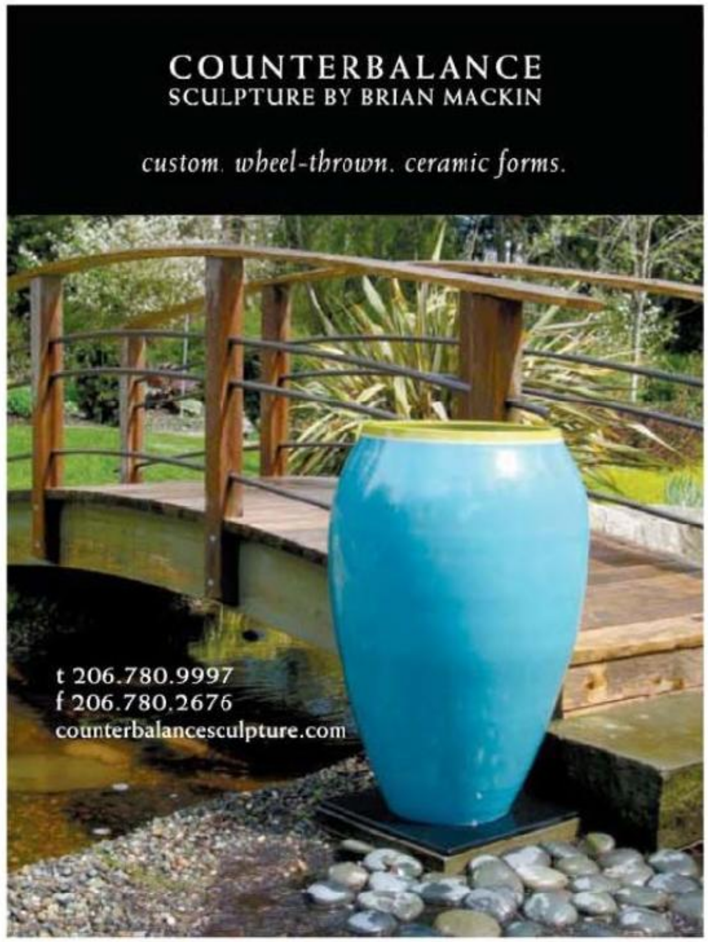

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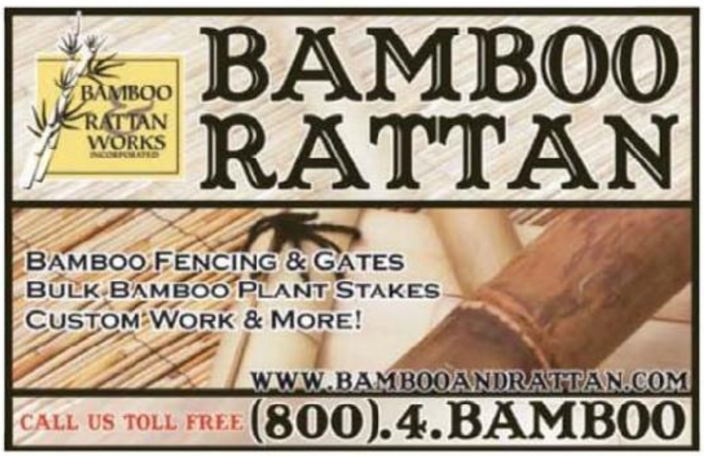

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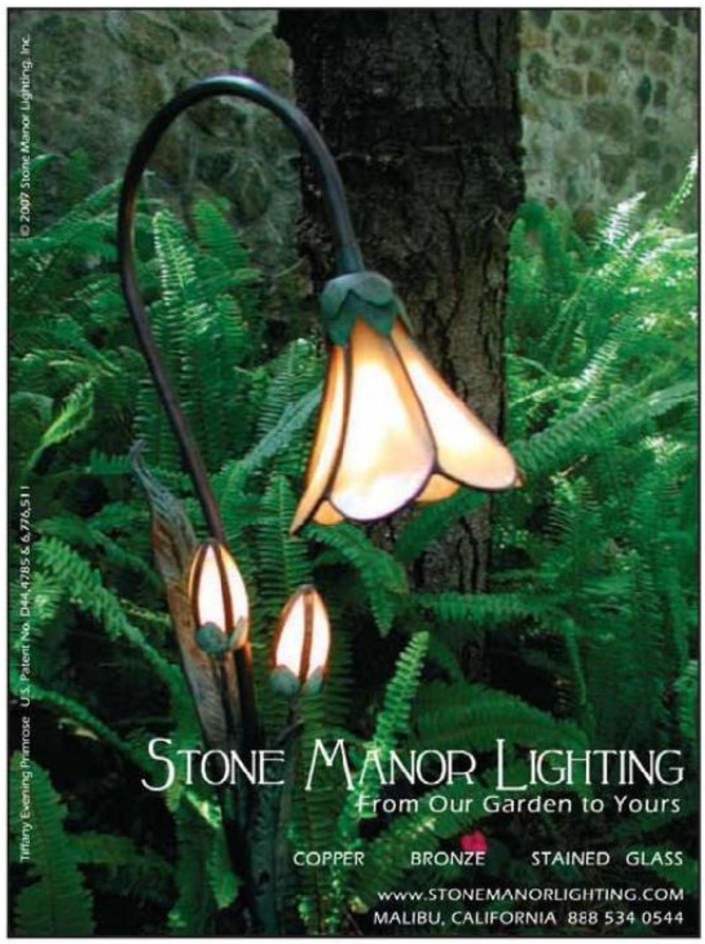

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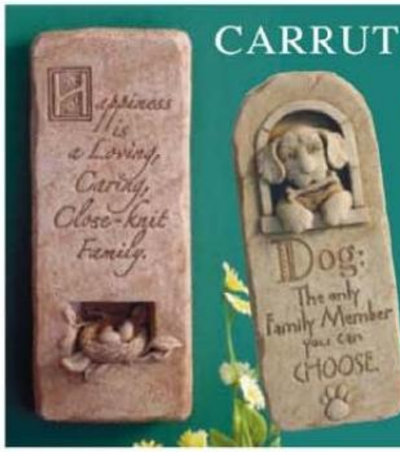
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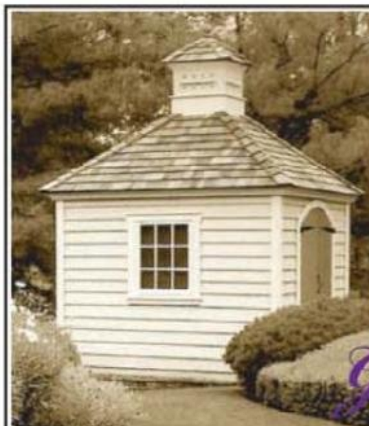


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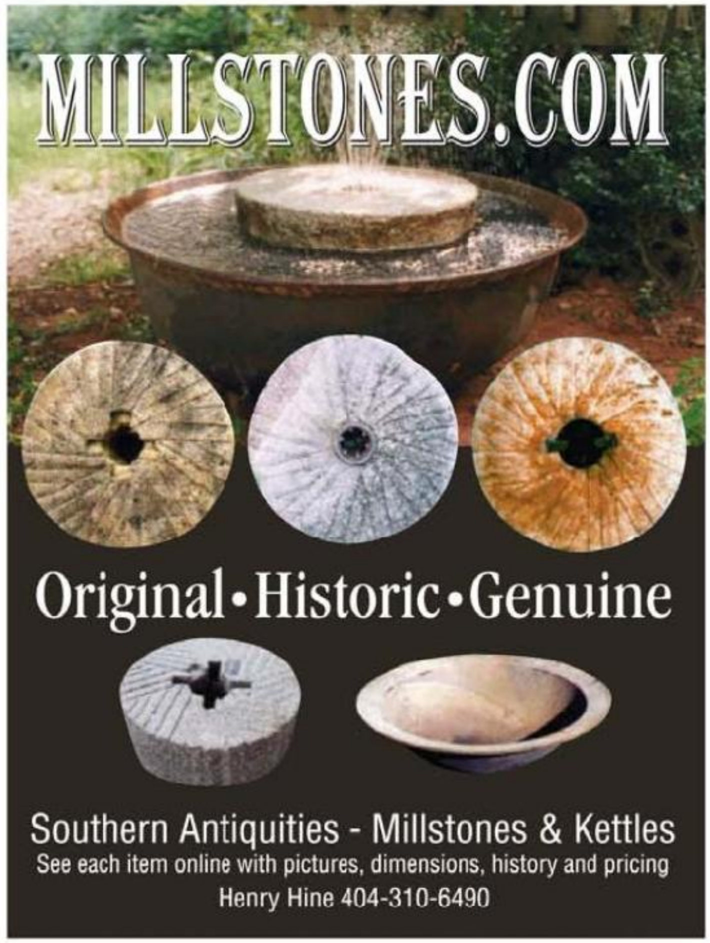

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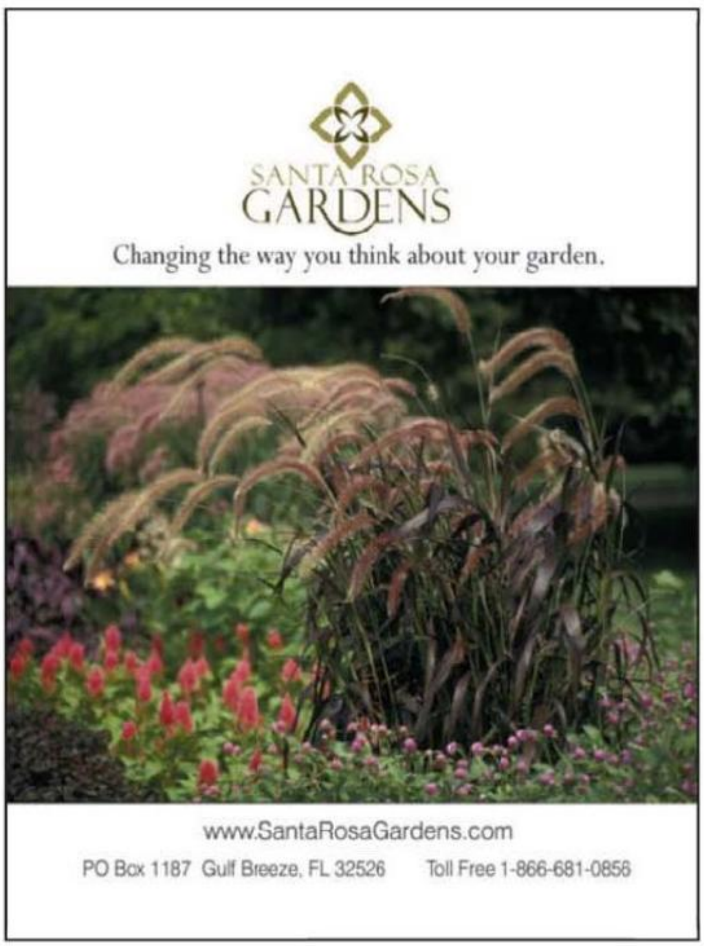
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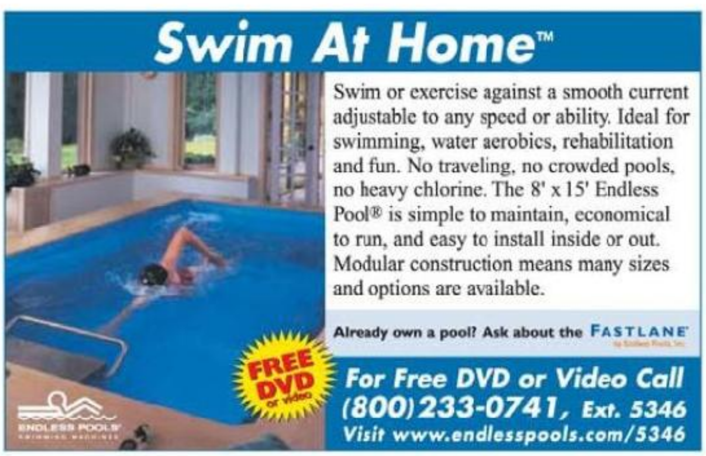

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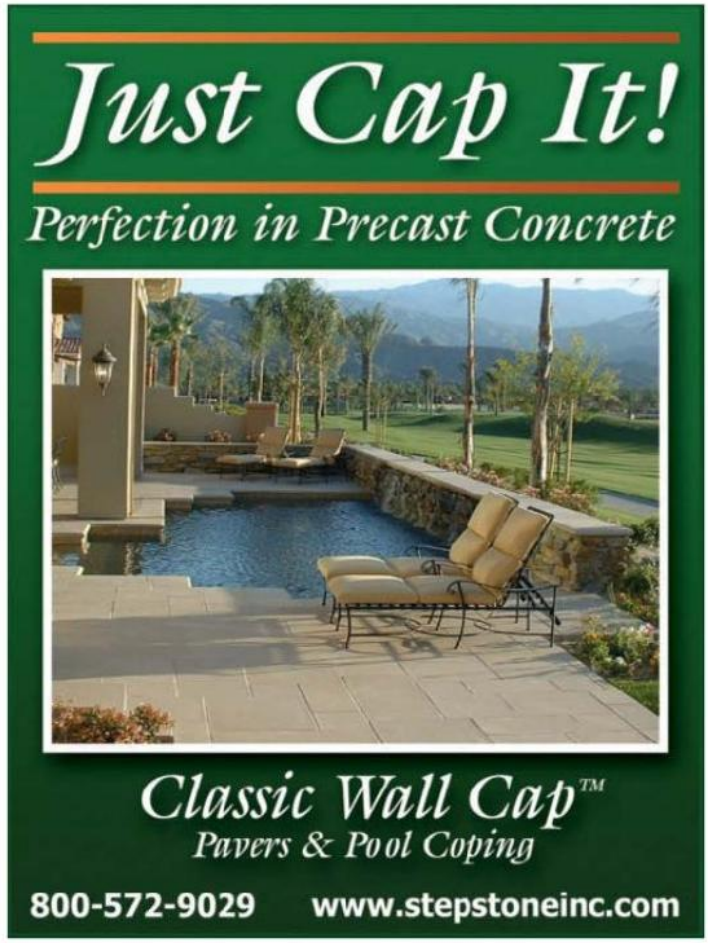

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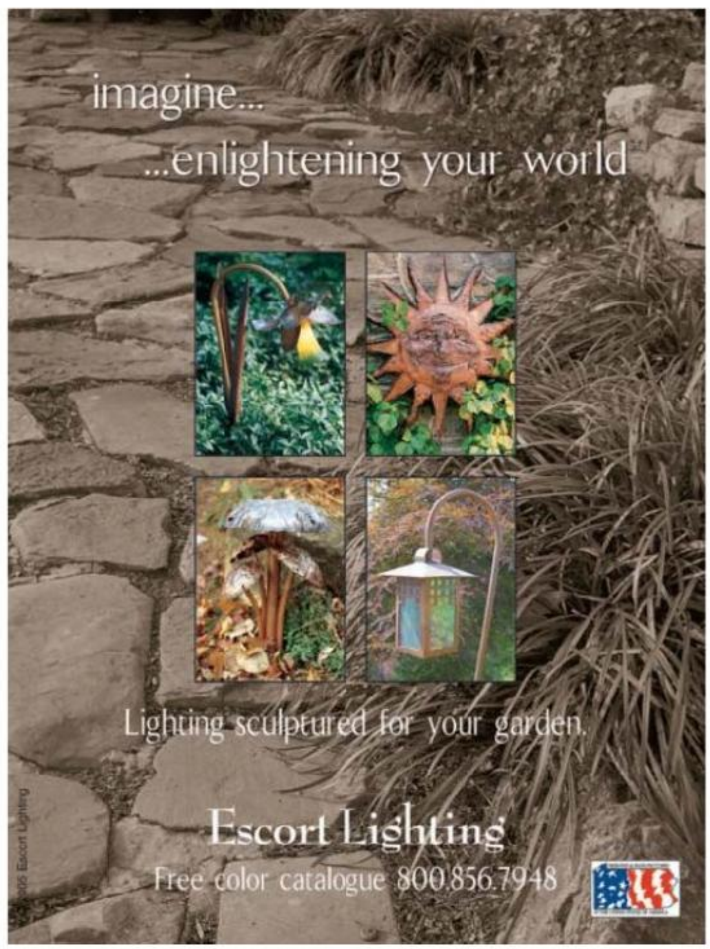

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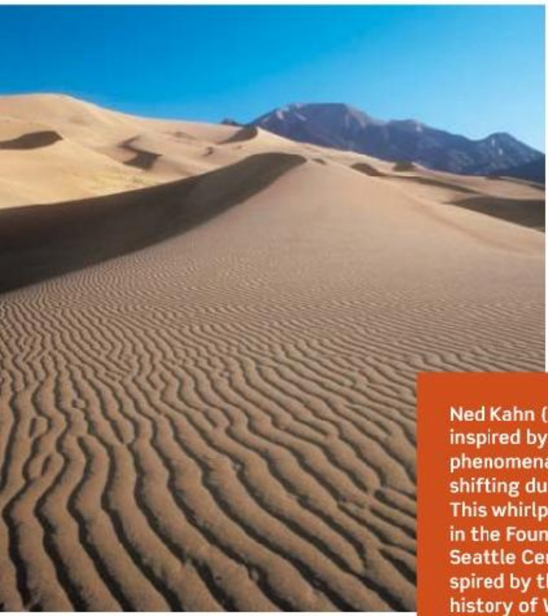

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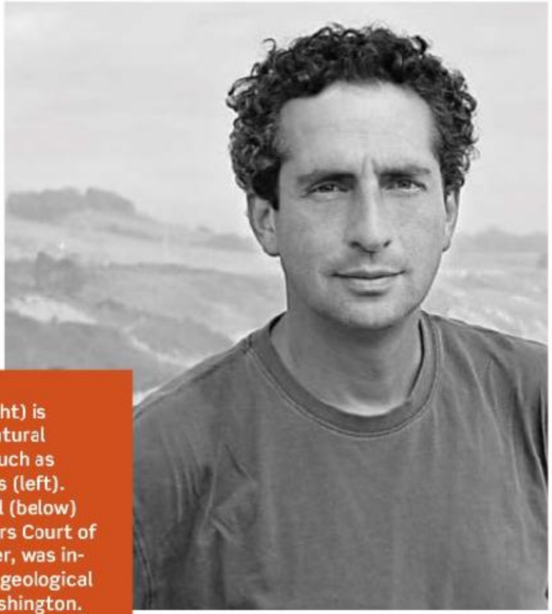

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Ned Kahn (right) is inspired by natural phenomena such as shifting dunes (left). This whirlpool (below) in the Founders Court of Seattle Center, was inspired by the geological history of Washington.



Q. *What is outdoor living really about?*
A. We are animals that have evolved living outside for millions of years. Our senses are tuned to hear the rush of water, to see movement through the complexity of a forest, to smell the plants, to feel the sun.
Q. *Which landscapes have inspired you?*
A. A cliff of slowly avalanching sand in the Great Sand Dunes National Park.
Q. *What human needs drive your work?*
A. People often comment that my artworks are like watching fire or light playing off water. What is it about these kinds of phenomena that invite people to watch for hours, again and again over the span of a lifetime? Part of the answer is an interplay of order and disorder. Enough order that the mind perceives beauty and enough disorder that the patterns never exactly repeat and surprises occasionally arise. Another part of the answer is that the basic elements of fire, light and water are deeply woven into the fabric of our minds. These rippling, fluctuating phenomena remind us, in a direct sensory way, that everything in the universe and our minds is pulsing, changing, arising and passing away.
Q. *What's the best gift you ever received?*
A. A banjo from my wife and kids.
Q. *What do you try to avoid?*
A. Art to be experienced by people in passing cars. There is something about the view through a car window that deflates things.
Q. *What would be your second career choice?*
A. Meteorologist/storm chaser.
Q. *Whom would you like to work with?*
A. Architect Norman Foster.—JF

■ *For more information see nedkahn.com.*

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: J.C. LEACOCK/CTD; JEAN DASKAIS; NED KAHN

